

# The Games machine

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EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW

## GOLD OF THE AZTECS

Sensational strategy action from US Gold



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# The Games machine

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# BOOT-UP

## KINETIC ENERGY

Old programmers never die, they just work on more advanced systems. Or so seems the case with ex-Imagine programmer, David Lawson, and his newly-formed software developers Kinetica...



platform game? (Seen one, seen 'em all. Nothing new. Yawn. Fine. But I forget to mention that the game contains 200kbs of graphics — and yet the game contains no code? 'Yep, the game is, in effect, empty. I neglected to say that the intention is superb, the game 'sprites' are... well, I don't think 'anonymous' conveys the effect. More like, '100%'. However, this platform game contains one revolutionary feature which I have never seen in any platform game to date: Depth. I'd advise any



Okay, this 'no-code' business. How can a game run with no code, for goodness sake? 'Gold is put

every machine — there are no conventions, therefore, apart from retaining some of the graphics — which is done by linking another machine (Amiga, 386, etc) to the final priority system and using it as a colour output device. This system effectively turns other computers into peripherals. So you'll know what the graphics will look like on that particular machine.'

Interesting but massive. Going back to the original question — actually there is a very small piece of code which runs the game, the heart of the system. However, this is pretty big and does not answer the question. In fact, our Kinetic couldn't answer the question of the 'empty game' directly — but can you blame him?

The problem with games is that it is the programmers who write them. But programmers are not always creative. Artists usually are. So they can sit down and draw the game whilst doing the equivalent of programming it — without needing to have the programming knowledge.'

Sounds like we've reached Utopia! Further, you can modify the game and expect instant changes. So each artist can play around with the game to their heart's content. There are 25,000 individual



Liverpool are quite a good football team. Fred Garry had a ball of fire. Leonardo Da Vinci could draw a lot. Gold of the Sun is a platform game written by Kinetica — life is full of understatements.

Take the Kinetica example. What's so special about a

platform kinetic to look that one up, they won't have come across the word very often.

Now hang on, hang on — I can tell you all have lots and lots of questions as to how, in the most possible way, David Lawson of Kinetica and try to persuade him to divorce.

together in a sort of graphical environment. You've seen an Apple Mac? You've seen the way you point and click with the mouse? Well that's how you put the game together, you point and click. You don't need a programmer to put it together. In addition, once the game is written it runs on



pieces of graphics in Gold which make up the game. This gives a clue to how the animation is constructed. The graphics are individually created using DeluxePaint 3, and then they are passed down a sort of assembly line — each person, in turn, improving, adding, enhancing, until the game is

created. Take the hero, for example, who can do over 300 separate things (3000 frames of animation). The hero was initially drawn doing a number of actions. From this basic a construction set was created. So as the hero walks across the screen he's made of legs, two lower legs, kneecaps, two upper legs, the



torso in three parts, belt, gut, pouch, sword on his back, upper and lower arms, hands and a head. This 'Agnar' system saves enormous amounts of memory.

The plot is fairly basic, you're an Indiana Jones-type hero who is after the — all together now — gold of the Aztecs! The game idea began as a test program for the

propriety software. The team decided to see how far they could push the system. 'We then sat down and thought that it would make quite a good game. We designed all of the screens, interactions, etc, just to exercise the software. To create a game that would be impossible to do by hand.

They pushed the system as far as it grew and grew, becoming more and more complex — a regular Frankenstein! The reason for the platform game idea was the challenge to create a human form that moves around the screen in an intelligent manner. The Agnar system was developed to achieve this end.

Every section of the game is totally different. One section sees you in the jungle, this bit is very

arbitrary; the next section is a platform game, swinging from ropes, etc) and the next section you're confronted with a heap of puzzles. Actually this variation of play was one of the features I liked, the other was the integration of puzzles. This makes Gold of the Aztecs a game which will span a variety of tastes. As you play

## DAVE LAWSON: YEAR ONE

After lighting his computer on fire with a Cambridge 88.14 (classic Oliver's very first computer) David entered the hallowed halls of Bug-Dye where he developed the first commercial products for the VIC-20 VIC 40k, written on an Atari 8-bit machine and converted to the VIC in a day), the BBC (placeware) and, probably, the Spectrum (Special Invaders). In fact Special Invaders was available before anyone had actually received a Spectrum! The game, believe it or not, being written safely via reference

from the first copy of the Spectrum manual.

David's interest in the computer business as a whole led him into other aspects of game production — he was part of the very first teleselec network for the UK, for example.

However, it was when David Lawson co-founded the groundbreaking software house Imagine that he was forced into the limelight. These were the days of the computer whizzkid. The lad who made a million by the time he was 18, owned a Ferrari, and lived the high-

life. However, there appears to be more to him than that written about in the L'Espresso magazine. David explains: 'There were a lot of unfounded rumours about Imagine. It's like most of the stories seen in the Sunday papers. Most of it was invented just to create a good story.'

From the ashes of Imagine, Paycock was born, and again David was the first with a 16-bit game, on the ST. The game was disastrous, a product that was rejected all that was left of Imagine's magazine

Bandersnatch. Regrettably of its origin, the game was visually impressive, if not too addictive.

However, Paycock's low deal more in commissioning protocols, enhancing and marketing them for final sale. This was one of the reasons for Lawson's departure, product development (initially treating the games themselves) being more his forte. This is what forming Kinetics is all about, that and developing their revolutionary propriety game creation systems. As David says himself: 'Kinetics is technology driven'.



Gold the game builds, becoming more difficult to play.

The final section of the game takes place in a tomb (it does at the moment anyway). The plot's always changing; every room is filled with mechanical contraptions. Constructed as you would expect a 600-year-old mechanical contraption to be. There are plenty of stone cogs and everything is worked by windfalls. For example, you'll walk into a room, see this contraption in front of you and know if you walk forward it is going to go off, the cogs will start spinning you'll be trapped and killed. So you'll have to figure out how to disable it. Other highlights? There are plenty, but there is one sequence which may or may



not stay in the final version. It shows a young lady who is lying on a slab where a nearby statue comes to life and promptly takes her head off. All the carvings on the statue then come to life and start eating each other, in the manner the statue moved around. As David says, "He is huge. He really is big. Much bigger than the elephants."

Oh, didn't I mention the elephants? It, and all the other characters, have been created using a similar 'glow' technique. Sound is created by the prolific David Whittaker, with nine individual pieces.

Anyone who has an Amiga, ST and PC will be able to play Gold. Hopefully, one or two console versions will follow, although they haven't been specified at the time of writing.



I must admit that platform games have never been my cup of tea. *Shadow of the Beast* was very handy to review for my Amiga, but actually playing it? Well, no. Gold on the other hand has for the first time whetted my appetite.

I am sure its general appeal will ensure its rip-roaring success. Never mind the advanced technology behind it, *Lureborn* is back in town — watch out.



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# MAGIC FLY

Magic Fly? Sounds awfully like a demented fairy tale about a young boy whose only friend is Martin the Magic Fly. But it's not, thank heavens! Magic Fly is, in fact, a new shoot-and-slasher game from Electronic Arts.

In the distant future, where spacecraft resemble tentacles and exceptions, there is an elite group called the Magic Fly.



squadron, of which you're a member. Your quest is to track down and destroy the Goli Trawl organization's HQ and locate the plans for their new prototype fighter. Featuring solid 3-D graphics, with over 30 different types of alien craft to destroy, Magic Fly is out on the ST and Amiga in August.



# YOLANDER

Lapoton's recently-launched independent label Williams hopes to follow the success of Revolution 121 with the launch of Yolander, the toughest, meanest, fastest platform game created (it says here).

Yolander's designer is Steve Bux who, back in the midst of time, created the cozy and chaotic C64 platform game Abolition. Now then, Yolander

# PSYGNOSIS FIVE

Shiny packaging and snooty artwork is soon to be the order of the day, once again, at the Psygnosis office. There are five titles lined up and ready to sign on the dotted line: Nitro, Dr Maffio, Walker, Beast II and Awesomeness.

Nitro is a race game, viewed from overhead as you betting along the many courses (on road and cross-country tracks) and hopefully thinking the competing racers. Increase the power of your car by adding components, bought with prize money to make it the meanest turbo machine around! Out on the ST at the end of July, with the Amiga version following in August.

Here's a strange game to come from Psygnosis. It's called Dr Maffio. Set in a chocolate factory, your unenviable job is to protect chocolate drip creatures from the evil Dr Maffio and his stinking great hammers. When playing Dr Maffio, Psygnosis reckons it's just like watching a cartoon. Visit until October and ask for yourself on the ST and Amiga.

Walking action is on the way in Walker, a scuffling shoot-'em-up featuring a huge battle walker. Though Walker is still



in the early stages of development, our man on the inside reported that 'you may be able to walk in and out of the screen, or you may not — but the least moves nicely.' We'll keep you informed on the progress of Walker as it nears its release date in December.

The Beast is back — or is it simply its shadow? No matter, the beast is one of Psygnosis's most successful products is heading your way on the Amiga. Promising more to do, deeper puzzles and generally increased interaction, Shadow of the Beast 2 is planned for a

release in October.

And finally, the long-awaited Awesomeness is just around the proverbial software corner. What does it offer? Being an epic space game, there's heaps of stuff to shoot, with



plenty of interplanetary trading to keep you thinking. Sounds familiar, what's so different about Awesomeness? Rather than being a fixed-polygon 3-D game, the graphics are 3-D with lots of smashing appeal!

Psygnosis have heaps more new titles in the pipes, look out for Puzgo, Tempus and Aquaventure (japping up in the pipeline soon).



**COMMANDER WOLF:** Carl Lewis a bit good, this. It's Commander Wolf from Tibia. We first in a series of eight games using Tibia's latest games creation system. Commander a unit of 12 soldiers, playing against a general player, in an attempt to capture as much enemy land as possible. Out on the 16-bits very soon.





## MR DO! RUN RUN

Mr. Do! He's doing the do on the ST and Amiga soon in his madcap arcade game *Mr. Do! Run Run* from Emerson. Mr. Do! is a misfit trapped in a world of monsters and his only defense is a crystal ball. "We'd had him popping the pills on each level so he can escape to

the next, and don't forget to grab the fruit to build up extra bonus points. *Mr. Do! Run Run* is just one of the many classic, old-but-gold games Emerson have lined up for the next few months on the ST and Amiga. The price? A snip at £14.95 each!



**CADAVER** The Bimbo Brothers are still working hard on their fantastic arcade adventure *Cadaver*, due to be the game of 1990! (Yawn, Yawn). Out from Imageworks on ST, Amiga and PC in September.



## I PLAY 3-D SOCCER

Italian software house Simulmondo is to release its games in the UK, the first of which is the oddly-titled *I Play 3-D Soccer*. Simulmondo reckon it's a masterpiece, it took two years to program and was created by a team of nine continental soccer. *I Play 3-D Soccer* features 84 different European clubs, simultaneous two player action (with up to six players), and goes on release in October for the C64, Amiga, Atari ST and PC.

## SEGA TREATS



With the official release of the Mega Drive in September, there are no signs that Sega are losing interest in the Master System. Indeed, their news of three forthcoming releases you can play in and play. The classic role-playing game *Ultimate Fighter* is just one, with *Alien Soldier* and *Shinobi Works* and the swirling shoot 'em up *Freedom Fighter* in hot pursuit. As usual, the Sega trio are being distributed by Virgin.

As they say in France, "Wah wah-uh! (E), and you sure about that? — (E) French software house Infogrames have a bundle of digital delights up their sleeves. For a start, *Drakken*, the fantasy



*Eagle's Ridge* is set 5,000 years into the future and presents an arcade adventure challenge as you attempt to conquer the universe. Sounds fun.

Christmas sees the return of Tintin in a new adventure: *Tintin and the Moon*. Joined by Captain Haddock,

Professor Calculus, and Smokey the dog (woof woof), Tintin gets to grips with the curse of King Pharoosmarc (yay it's Luffy, isn't it this strange thing called Alpha Waves — too cool to describe here (it's supposed to help you relax and dream), wait for the review).



game, is appearing on the very Fall Festival. Sadly, not everyone has one yet, so let's have a quick run through the five titles appearing on the ST, Amiga and PC before the end of the year.

*Blunder in Space* is a shoot-'em-up and simulation game set aboard an orbital space station. Not only are there enemies to shoot but you also have to take control of the space station.

*Metal Masters* lets you create your own robotic fighting machine which can be entered into battle arena contests or constructed especially to compete in sporting events — the objective is to build the best and win the most.

## THE SPY WHO LOVED ME

September is the launch date for the latest game in Conami's ongoing Bond series. This time 007 stars in *The Spy Who Loved Me* and Conami hope to bring all the excitement of the movie to your screen. Bond, along with beautiful Soviet agent Anya Amasova, has to foil the launch of nuclear missiles. The action starts with three chase sequences: firstly in a Lotus Esprit, followed by more fast racing in speedboats and then on to jets. After exhausting yourself on those, there's a hard to hand battle with James, the helicopter everyone loves to hate. And that there's the little matter of missing that Soviet Agent... Out on all major 8- and 16-bit formats.



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# THE BOY WHO

Ever since he fell out of bed as a child, Paul Rigby has wanted to fly. When he received a computer, his first question wasn't 'What's the best arcade game around?', it was more like 'When are they doing a Flight Simulator 1.0 conversion?' So it's not surprising that Paul was the first person knocking on the door of Dynamics when they released news of Red Baron and other new products.

(from a release of 480,000) downloaded from laser disk catalogues printed by the Smithsonian Institute in America.

A campaign option will only cater for a 'personal' victory. That is, if you play on the German side, your side will win the war. However, you can still 'win' as you are judged by your record. The large campaign starts at the

highlighting, balloon-busting, Zeppelin-fuelling, bomber escort and night raids.

## RISE OF THE DRAGON

Rise of the Dragon is big. The first version will fit around eight high-density disks. You'll get about 1600 of info on there with VGA and VGA graphics. If the game had run over normal low-density disks (the 5.25s), with just VGA artwork, would be 80 disks! The artwork art, done by a professional comic illustration, was reviewed in via PC.

Life on Earth 2000 has taken a turn for the worse. The atmosphere resembles that 'clean and shiny' feel of the film Blade Runner. Overcrowding, global food shortages, serious drug abuse and a corrupt police force mix with the high-tech images of hover cars and futuristic ground transports.

A new drug, *Neuropharmacine*, is doing the rounds. Contained in a rock-on patch, you place it over a bare patch of skin (after shaving the area). However, a new sub-type of the drug has begun to appear which contains a lethal virus.

You hit the patch... The drug enters your bloodstream... You get a tremendous 'high' from the drug... but the virus takes over... Producing madness, insanity and, ultimately, death.

A drug lord, Deng Huang, is behind the drug. He is the second behind the, the bringer of chaos, as foretold by the prophecy.

Dragon has been produced with a HyperCard-type environment. Using the GDD (Game Development System), the whole game is point and click. Integrating invisible screen 'tellers' that activate conversations (animation, sound, etc.) Complex menu trees substitute the interactivity with characters. However, conversation is non-linear, it has a variety of different endings.



■ Rise of the Dragon 1 showing greater speed and precision using a combination of pencil, animation and artwork. The real product being very beautiful 'artifacts' that are subordinated into a PC.

I've been looking forward to this one for some time. Clearly because of the innovative way Dynamics write flight sims — A7D Tank Killer being a fine example. Using their 3-D space capture system, with Red Baron Dynamics have re-created the characters of the actual Aces who flew at the time, complete with accurate manoeuvres etc.

There will be 15 separate aircraft in this sim. Each with their own flight model in addition, each aircraft will have their own structural model! This was deemed necessary due to the fragile nature of the biplanes flown at the time. Many had their own quips, design faults and so on. (If a Fokker Triplane into a steep dive and the wings will tip-off.) Engine characteristics have been programmed in too. The

Camel's engine, for example, increased altitude during right-hand turns, lowering it on left-hand turns.

Complete have been digitized from rare original film 1 aircraft or via mockups and photos



■ In Dynamics Red Baron fly high and keep the view clear of Potters (ie, hit).



beginning of the war with relatively poor equipment. You are given better equipment as and when that piece of equipment becomes historically available.

Other features include wireless, hand-signal communications from below aviation during formation flying who will be digitally animated. Signals will interpret as attack, retreat, etc. Missions include



# COULD FLY



Immersed within a village-like environment, one of the Dragon's side acts up as triggering a bit of action.

The game itself is also non-linear; you have the ability to wander the game world for hours, looking at objects (which can be picked up) and investigating people without making the slightest progress. The design goal, therefore, intends to offer tremendous freedom of movement, freedom of play and a feeling of the wonder of discovery when you make progress.

## HEART OF CHINA

Heart of China is also based on the QOS. The only difference between Rise of the Dragon and Heart of China is that China overlays digitized images of human actors and actresses over the artwork artwork.

The plot surrounds a 1930s action-adventure story. You are a cool-and-out-there jaded, "lucky" Jake Masters. Your task is to rescue the kidnapped daughter of a very powerful man who has made one or two

enemies over in China.

You end up looking all over the world (London, Paris, Hong Kong, etc.). Besides yourself, there are two major characters. Kate Lomas, the woman you're rescuing, and Chi, a huge sidekick. Character viewpoints change in the game depending on what's happening. So if Jake is thrown in jail, the story changes from his viewpoint to Kate or Chi as they figure out a way to liberate him.

The real appeal that Dynamic continually deplores during the evolution of these consoles was that neither China or Dragon are anything like David Wolf's "Secret Agent" — their first impressive foray into interactive movies. Both of the new games will be far more interactive than David Wolf ever was. There will be no sitting back and watching long periods of "movie" action in the new games. The new releases contain a wholly new game system which promises to continually involve the player.

## STELLAR SEVEN



This is a remake of an original wireframe, monochrome game which borrowed many of the ideas from the original *Starline* arcade game, but with more strategy.

The new version introduces solid 3-D graphics with bitmapped backgrounds rendered (hand-drawn, airbrushed then scanned into the game) in glorious light-saturated, VGA with Roland/Kellie sound support on the PC.

# MONKEY B

There's something strange going on in Chicago. It's could be the fact that the town's full of computer types for the Consumer Electronics Show. Even so, there's something very, very unusual about the place. Marshal 'Monkey' Rosenthal is on the case...

It's not often that you step off the elevator to be greeted by a number of little skeletons. And you don't normally see treasure chests surrounded by pirates — who seem to have stepped off at the Jolly Roger to quit a few days — strolling leisurely 'wherever' (Jim told) on one of your hotel floors. Along with fellow bemused journalists, I move over to the Room Bar, order some grog (served in dirty mugs), take a few sips and sit down to reflect on the sequence of events that have led me to this very strange Lucassen party.

It was at the last Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas that I first approached Lucassen's Ron Gilbert (author of *Myst* and *Zork*) about his next game. All he started out in a moment of candor was that it will be funny and full of twist/turning entertainment. Attempts to get specifics were greeted by a stony silence, which, to be fair, might have also been a result of all the champagne consumed that night.

Over the next months, Ron was under continued pressure to give this fast-hungry journalist more information, his eventually cracked. "Okay," says Ron, "meet me at Chicago Club, the Friday night before the show opens and I'll tell it." It was agreed. I called the club's agency and requested the surveillance on him.

Chicago, Friday night. Here we are in the dimly lit depths of the underground parking garage at the Hilton Hotel. Ma, Ron, a 200 PG, a 15-inch monitor, and the only working electrical outlet in the whole damn place. Ron does the foot-up honours, and presents *The Secret of Monkey Island*. Set in the age of piracy in the Caribbean, a teasing plot surrounds our young hero (no name yet) as he arrives fresh and red behind the ears from England to the port of Hispaniola. His desire: to become a

successful pirate, wealthy beyond all dreams.

What can only be accomplished by performing three tasks: defeating the Sword Master, finding the buried treasure, and becoming a Master Thief by stealing from the Governor's Mansion. None of which is going to be easy, since none of the pirates hold any respect for you.

Add to the above that there are some very weird things nobody is talking about," says Ron. "None of these pirates seem to want to leave the island, they're all afraid of some talk about a ghost ship sailing the sea. Taking some time to find out what's going on here might prove as useful as the quest to become a successful pirate."

Keep in mind that we're striving for humor, Ron, notes Ron. "The one-liners and most jokes that the pirates could ever tell — they're a bunch of great guys that need a cartoonist. In real life you



wouldn't have wanted to ever get too close, especially if your sense of smell was good. And you're not penalized for being humorous either — you can say silly things, yet still get the information needed to progress in the game." Ron also lets slip that one of the pirate characters looks "pretty familiar" to anyone who has played Lucassen's *Loom*.

Now a bit about those three quests. There aren't any arcade sequences in *Monkey Island*, so you have to defeat the Sword Master with your rapid wit, not a dagger or cutlass. Options appear when you

confront her (yes, she's mighty tough), and it's those choices that will affect the outcome of the fight. This is true throughout the game as you can talk to almost every single character



			Walk to	
Open	Walk to	Use	↑	+
Close	Pick up	Look at		
Push	Talk to	Turn on		
Pull	Give	Turn off	↓	

# BUSINESS



found — and conversations are mighty important in order to find out what's going on.

But what about treasure. Plan, Spanish doubloons, diamonds, rubies, pearls and all that stuff? Finding gold and other good stuff means looking about, but the best way to find it is to just cut to sea; and that means assembling a crew and buying a ship. Which brings more problems than you realize — the guy to deal with sails like a used car salesman? (I mean, whoever stops to consider options like *Maripatado* has nothing to fear!) Then there's the Governor, who just happens to be the kind of woman you're looking for. She likes you less, worse... Of course she has to go and get kidnapped by the ghost ship. Just your luck, huh?

So you decide to go after her in the best tradition of being a hero, or pirate, or hero. And that means heading for Monkey Island — which is far from being deserted. First you'll have to sail there, taking on other ships and firing cannons, without getting sunk. More happens on the island, but that would be telling.

While Ron plays from cheating so much, here's a few game tips. No external keyboard devices (like the



Open  
Close  
Push  
Pull

Walk to  
Pick up  
Talk to  
Give

Use  
Look at  
Turn on  
Turn off

Walk to



tapeCD for Laser) are included — it's easy to get the 'plot' from the first few screens. There's high resolution images, of course, combined with great animation. Part of what makes a game 'seamless' is in what

you can't see — like an interface that does its job, but keeps out of the game's face. Continuing the point 'n' click style found in *Monkey Mania*, *Indiana Jones and Llamas*, and refined along the way, all actions can be performed by just using the onscreen pointer, there's no typing whatsoever.

The art and music is as highly detailed as ever, being the result of Steve Purcell and Mark Ferrari. Besides the various sound effects, there's support for MIDI and Roland boards on the IBM.

But there is a new and highly noticeable feature: proportional scaling. Characters increase and decrease in size as they move towards and away from the foreground — even on the diagonal. All without any noticeable effect on the speed. Watching this — with animation still in effect at all time — is worth the price of admission alone.

Ron continues, "Puzzle-solving means of course, but it's designed to advance the game, not keep you stuck in your tracks. First-time adventures will feel comfortable here, while the more experienced can move about a bit more to locate areas of interest not readily

apparent. The game is about having fun, it's almost impossible to get bored — just don't get jumping off cliffs. Remember to look everywhere, do as much as you can. There are a good place to pick up information, just don't be too conspicuous if you're not prepared to back up your play. As I mentioned before, there's a subtle cut-plot which can be discerned. I'm building the sequel around this — it's not important to playing the game, but it can give you a lot of advanced notice for next time. My final comment: There's more strange things going on with ships that you might think!

Care still screaming into the parking lot, Gauss we've been here a bit too long. Ron picks up his stuff and takes off, muttering about a party he has to attend. One he didn't see fit to tell me about. Good thing I picked the jewel earlier and took the invitation.

My mind teases with the thought as the effects of the alcohol begin to pass and I return to reality. Which is kind of scary — let's just off this eye patch off that pale corpse in the corner. Strip it for a succubus effect, and it's back to the Scum Bar for another round of grog.



Walk to  
Pick up  
Talk to  
Give

Walk to  
Pick up  
Talk to  
Give

Walk to  
Pick up  
Talk to  
Give

Walk to  
Pick up  
Talk to  
Give

The Barrel of Monkey Island is the latest game from Lucasfilm to exploit their innovative menu system. Previous adventures to use this user-friendly technique include the successful *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, *Graphic Adventure* (above), *Monkey Mania* and *Llamas*. There is absolutely no typing whatsoever, just point at an object and click on an action. Lucasfilm promises that all adventures will be like this one day if arcade players are to be converted to adventures, more companies will have to follow Lucasfilm.

# YOU NEED HANDS

Whoever said a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush got it completely wrong. Of course, a bird in the hand is worth *not* at all. However, the latest console in your hand is worth the adoring gaze of the world's computer press. Currently under the spotlight are Japanese giants, NEC. And it was at the latest Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago that Marshall M Rosenthal caught up with them, "obtained" their latest fan-bundle and soaked off behind the screens to bring you this hands-on report...

The Eighties was the decade of the true portable. Within the past years, we've seen a revolution in (or the most) entertainment. Personal stereos were commonplace, and when these little 3-inch TVs arrived heads turned. Also around were Game and watches, soon followed by single-game LCD hand-heads. However, it was not until 1989 that the portable market exploded.

Early on in the year, Sony launched their impressive Video Walkman in video, its recorder, and TV to Go — and the size of a VHS videocassette. Throughout the year, Casio and Citizen also released numerous mini-TVs with color displays for under a \$100. Then, when summer came, the game explosion occurred. Nintendo — who had far out-

last market with their PC Engine (called) and released the TurboGrafx-16, were quietly working on a hand-head that would turn the portable console market upside-down. Time for Marshall M Rosenthal to take on the task.

## MARSHAL MEETS CASE OF THE NEC HAND-HELD

After making it through all the PC Engine hand-heads, I was interested to know why NEC were so confident that this bag of goodies was going to put a massive dent in the sales of both Atari and Nintendo. So, as I returned to headquarters, complete with a new set of batteries, I looked the door behind me and prepared to take the sucker to bits.

Like Atari's Lynx line, the baby is one cool dude. Beautifully finished in matte black plastic, it almost resembles the Sony Video Walkman — but with the screen slightly tilted to cut out reflections and improve contrast. Looking below the screen, you could be forgiven for thinking it was the promised ultra-Game Boy. Game played on the left, select and run buttons, and two angled fire buttons. What gives it away as an Engine variant are the two adjustable-rod touch switches (commonplace on all PC Engine 16-bit-on-pixels). Surefire. It's a touch larger than the Game Boy at 4.3x7.3x1.8 inches.

Around the sides of the TurboGrafx are plenty of holes and switches to fiddle with. At the bottom is a port for a stick or cable, on the side the contrast, brightness and volume controls, and earphone and game socket. Keeping the TurboGrafx going shouldn't be any problem as the 30 percent batteries last for around four-five hours. There's

also a rumour that some new battery conservation circuitry could bump it up to six hours uninterrupted play.

Taking it slowly, let's take the sucker apart — after all, it's only a prototype worth around £15,000!

Numerous sounds of cracking plastic as a small screwdriver prays the front of the case from the back.

The electronics inside look not familiar, especially some of the chip components. However, there's a Hi-C 50MHz microprocessor running the show, flying at 1.18 MHz.

The built-in colour LCD screen measures 3.7 inches diagonally, and it's very sharp and clear — easily as good as the Lynx. It's also cleverly placed in a recess which helps keep out extraneous light (which usually needs constant adjustment of the contrast and brightness).

Play I can't make much more of all these chips. I suppose I'd better remember to...

Oh, doesn't quite stay together. Now all we have is a screen's left. Funny how it doesn't fit as good as before, but give me a break. It's not for sale anyway. Now where's that ROM card I left my hands on?

A flick of the switch... It's dead! This is one dead screen. The resolution is just lighter than the Lynx, with a matrix of 320x224 pixels. There also seems a fair few colour anomalies. Left colour test, there surely can't be more than the Lynx's 16 colours... 1, 12, 20, 88, 100, 140, 200, 220, 250.

Hey, let's see that ROM card! It doesn't look good, in fact it's just a plain PC Engine card.

That means TurboGrafx will run great PC Engine games like Chase HQ, Legend of the Phoenix, etc. In fact this deal would be a mini Engine, complete with stereo sound pulsing through a robust speaker.

The availability of software could, ultimately, make the TurboGrafx succeed where the Lynx is failing. Even the Game Boy, with all of Nintendo's resources, has only managed 30 odd games at the time. Atari have got till December to get another 40 games out if they're to match the Engine when it comes out after Christmas. NEC hope there'll be around 100 games for it by the end of the year.

The Engine plays just like the Engine. Even with innumerable large sprites on screen, the Engine keeps running smoothly. The expansion port allows just two Engines to be linked together (the Lynx allows eight — if you can find seven friends who all have the same game as you, and want to play it at the same time). Game cards allowing two players games will have special "holes" in the software detecting whether they are running in the TurboGrafx or the normal PC Engine.

If that wasn't enough, NEC are also releasing an optional TV tuner with its own antennae and video sockets. Yip, that's right, a



console and TV in one. Whatever next? (Punch ROM card? — Ed.)

Of course, the waiting for its release is pretty annoying, but what makes it worse is that the TurboGrafx is only compatible with American PC Engine (TurboGrafx 16) games. The cards available in the UK are all Japanese imports so you will need to work with the present TurboGrafx — as the pin configuration is different. Still, NEC are bound to bring out a Japanese version soon, so save the tears.

The TurboGrafx will retail in the US for around £135, with the TV tuner an optional extra at approximately £40. NEC hope to launch by Christmas, which is quite possible as both the software and hardware are now finished.



reled on their successful Famicom — unveiled the Game Boy, a small, unobtrusive machine that soon passed a million sales, and put Nintendo back in the gameplayer's mind. But, in an attempt to beat the competition to the stage where Nintendo had sacrificed one important element: colour. Americans don't look at colour as a non-idea. If you can afford it, to American kids, colour is a God-given right. Still, there was Super Nintendo on the Game Boy, so things weren't that bad... until Atari announced the 480K Lynx, that is. The ball was back in Nintendo's court, and rumours started to surface concerning a colour Game Boy...

Meanwhile, back in Japan, NEC, who had just cracked the

# IT'S SHOWTIME!

Who said life as an American contributor was easy? They don't know the half of it. Look at Marshall M. Rosenthal for instance. The poor chap has had to travel all the way from New York to Chicago just to spend day after day being wine'd and dine'd by the money-burdened companies exhibiting at the latest Consumer Electronics Show. He can't even pop home at night: sometimes dosing down at expensive parties or plush hotels. In fact, he was so hung, he only had a few moments to spare when he rang the TGM offices earlier this month. So what's up, Marsh?

Arring, arring, arring, arring, it there, Marshall here. You want to know what's going on here at CES? What isn't? There are more games and more exciting products than ever before.

How about nine ome ome for the Lynx? Amongst them,

peek. Not to forget the super-hot Kaseki Laser Sight helmet which replaces the Dapper lightgun. You target with a red cross-hair which lights up on the screen. When you need to fire, you just shout into the microphone on the helmet.

## DO ME A FAVOUR...

...plug me into a Sega, for 17 companies are now producing software for the Mega Drive. Sega are getting the big bucks money behind their Michael Jackson Science Museum, which contains some fantastic animation.

If animation's your forte, then get a look at the Animation Studio from Disney's new software label. It's a full-featured animation package for the Amiga with plenty of art samples, examples of common animation techniques, and an 'action skin' feature that lets you draw new cells while still viewing the old ones.

NES are still doing fairly well for the TurboGrafx-16. There are all the label releases, like *Spherehouse*, *Double Shot* and the glorious *Rocky's Adventure* (ported as PC Kid in the UK). Do CD-ROM watch out for a batch of CDROM simulations almost ready for release.

Meanwhile, in another area

of the show, there are showing *Space Coast '91*, *King's Quest V*, and the strange *Knapping Up With James*. However, action-oriented players will opt for the new duo from Dynamic, *Heart of China* and *Blade Runner*, both featuring awesome new graphic interfaces and isometric wheels. All the games may appear on CD ROM, as both companies have shown a healthy interest in multimedia, and at Sierra's data stage at the point of bringing out a CD ROM drive for M1000 computers.

Which, as an aside, makes you want to take another look at Commodore's CDTV.



It doesn't stand for Compact Disc Television as you might think, but strangely, the acronym expands to Commodore Dynamic Total Vision.

But you guys know all about that, and somebody wants to use the pay phone, so I'll see ya. Try me on my cellular number 666-2526, Joe...



Commodore, where right players can simultaneously explore an endless wilderness. On the other hand, you could try rocking your way through 50,000 square feet of Nintendo NES and Game Boy stuff. In that jungle you'll find Bandai's ten-episode *Dick Tracy* and Intellivision's new roleplaying adventure game for the NES, *Alas, Game Boy's Batman* is not stuff, it's *Spherehouse* II. What about playing *Demolition*? Or *Boxing from Activision*, with its unique frontal perspective, and then there's the questionable fun of using Game Joy, the Game Boy clone which is probably going to get legally slapped by the big S.

Speaking of amusing peripherals, there's a new version of the Powerglove for the Nintendo — almost weightless and divided into a small gauntlet and a test



# FOUR GOLD PIECES

US Gold are preparing for an autumn offensive on the hearts and minds of dedicated games players. As well as our special look at the stunning Gold of the Artex, Paul Rixby takes an interested walk past the monitors in the development vaults of Birmingham's biggest software company...

## VALCOIN

Poor old Adrian Stephens, author of *Valcoine*, was verbally assaulted by yours truly also, in a desperate effort to grab some white-hot info. Blessed Ade with 4,000 questions in 20 seconds flat. Here are a few of the more legible ones: Mr Stephens could murder. Not bad under the circumstances. 'A plot?' Erm, er. Yeah, there's a plot. Erm.

This was a remarkably good effort from my Adrian as he wasn't really responsible for the plot in all. What he did tell me, though, was that you must defend losses from enemies. Not too dissimilar to *Defender*.

The game takes many of the elements that *El-Moron* had. For instance, on the 3-D landscape are coloured balls which occasional bump into each other. When they do, they connect to each other with a piece of string and run off in search of your boss. The *El-Moron* connection? It was a nice routine, it looked pretty in 3-D, so we thought, why not? However, as you are not dealing with 30,000 points any more (no fixed screen area), the programmers have to make sure the string doesn't stretch too far.

STE owners will be glad to hear about the enhancements on their version. The extra palette gives a smooth, colour grading effect down the screen, and extra memory allows sampled sound.

## MURDER

Here's dead Jim. Wish I'd have said that. But maybe I'll get my chance. In fact maybe I'll get 3.5 million chances! Discover

that's how many different murder ropes you can choose from in US Gold's *Murder*.

Played in an isometric view, with period-style grey-scale graphics, you have two hours to solve a variety of murders, all of which are set in an Edwardian-style house.

Choosing the murder of your choice is done by selecting a date (1894-1900). One of eight different houses are selected from one of four suit levels (choice to super sleuth).

During the game you will see the witnessing characters who occupy the house — and the dead departed lying on the floor. Clicking on your fellow inhabitants brings up a picture with their name, portrait and inventory. Each character has their own bit of information about the murder — whether it be true or false. Objects around the place can be of similar help — although they don't talk much! When you find a clue — finger prints, verbal information — you can store it.

There's a maximum of 60 rooms in any one house, with 30 objects and up to 28 characters. At the end of your search you can accuse someone — but make sure you're certain who it is!

*Murder* will be available this summer for Amiga, ST and PG.

## OPERATION HARRIER

Creative Materials introduced their revolutionary Hotscapc system in their last release, *Robot*. The concept is that the player stays in the centre of the screen while the landscape revolves around him. Although this is initially very weird, Hotscapc gameplay soon becomes intuitive.



After *Robot*, it's surprising to see a second Hotscapc development and a totally different game design. *Operation Harrier*, available on the Amiga, ST and PG, is an aerial game which places you in a 44-55 Harrier II V-STOL.

You take off from your carrier in the Middle East after being assigned a number of missions, each with increasing difficulty. You may have to hit an oil refinery or sink an enemy destroyer, either game you points and increases your rank.

## SNOW STRIKE

*Snow Strike* comes from Epyr in the States and, as a futuristic light simulation/combat game, is something of a departure for them.

It's April 1995 and the President of America has given the green light on Operation Snow Strike, a planned attack on the drug barons of South America. The F-14C-88 Cosmos, a state-of-the-art fighter, is purchased specifically for the mission.



As well as an overhead viewpoint, *Operation Harrier* allows you to move into the screen as your arsenal increases and loses altitude.

The graphics are a mixture of grey-scale polygons giving a combination of detail and realistic 3-D. And, of course, a large range of weaponry ensures some frenetic action.

It is interesting to note that there's always a *Robot* version in the works. With more polygons than any other version and graphics used in the 256-colour mode (256,000 pixels), the *Robot* version planned to utilize the gate attachment. It will be a shame, with the present *Robot* troubles, if we don't see this impressive version on sale.

This powerful and versatile fighter could destroy the major drug installations and transport routes — if it's flown by the right pilot. You are the right pilot.

The drug barons' domain has been mapped out by satellite pictures and the mission objectives are complete. The first add-on run begins. There are ten different missions to accomplish, and missions specially prepared for your training. Have you got what it takes to make the grade of a futuristic fighter pilot? Find out when *Snow Strike* goes on release in August on Spectrum, C64, Amstrad, Atari ST, Amiga and PG.



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## A REAL MEAL

Still lusty after an FM Towns for these definitive arcade conversions? Well, forget it! Something even better is laying claim to the title of the ultimate game machine. SNK's Neo-Geo console isn't trying to emulate the high standards of an arcade machine; it is an arcade machine! All of SNK's future arcade machines will be housing the same technology used by the Neo-Geo — games will look, sound and play the same.

For the technically minded, the Neo-Geo uses a 16-bit 68000 processor (like the Amiga) running at 10MHz with a 2804-co-processor (like a Spectrum CPU) dedicated to sound (it can produce stunning synthesized sounds as well as use samples). On the memory front, it's got lots of RAM and ROM, which isn't too impressive for the game cartridges actually do most of the work — each can hold up to 32

megabytes of game information. Consequently, the cartridges are larger than a normal console cartridge (larger than a VHS cassette in fact).

The Neo-Geo also features a credit-card sized slot on the front of the console into which you plug memory cards. These cards are used

in conjunction with a save facility to store your position in any game. You will also be able to take your memory card down to the arcades and use it on SNK's new line of arcade machines. The only other ports are two 15-pin joystick sockets at the front.

The one big catch is the price. A complete complete with joystick and memory card costs £2000 (it just too much, while the games cost a staggering £150 each; last night I took an almost 10-minute drive to a nearby Neo-Geo games rental market which they eventually had to say over time. It appears in a similar way to the video rental market with which we are familiar with over here.) In the meantime take a look at TGM's reviews of the first three Neo-Geo releases, and see if it's worth spending that much cash on a game. (At \$50 a go, you'd have to play the game 600 times to get your value for money out of it — £15.)

## NAM 1975

Sceneries are a waste of time for games like this — it's pure blasting action all the way. As Johnny Scout, you've got to blow waves of enemies before the final showdown with a megaboss-like professor. There are no innocent by-standers to worry about — if it moves shoot it, it doesn't move about it anyway.

The display is a cross between *Cabal* and *Operation Wolf*. At the bottom of the screen is your character who can move left or right while his joystick appears elsewhere on screen. Just like *Operation Wolf* the screen continuously scrolls either left or right, with the occasional status screen at the end of a level.

The joystick controls the movement of your joystick as well as that of your character. Moving left will move the joystick rapidly to the left while your character will walk very slowly in the same direction. In effect, you can practically stand still while your joystick tips all over the screen, great for clearing the area of enemies it soon is a secure position. However, there are numerous times when you want to move quickly in the other side of the screen to escape an incoming attack.

*Nam 1975* makes use of three of the joystick's four fire buttons. Button A acts as a standard fire button, button B acts as a grenade while button C works in conjunction with the joystick to speed up your movement or make your character perform a roll, in use this system works very well. The only problem I experienced was when stuck in a busy situation, fumbling fingers pressed the wrong key making the character roll when I really wanted to throw a grenade.

Occasionally after killing a baddy, you are rewarded with some additional weaponry. These weapons only last for a limited amount of shots but they're a lot more effective than your usual machine gun. So far the TGM team have discovered a flame thrower, a super-fast



machine gun, machine gun wielding women (they team up with your character when you free them from the badies) and a rocket launcher (actually only Mark Cassed claims to have found one of these). However, here a pathological liar and the rest of the TGM team don't believe that there's one in the game).

Sound and graphics wise *Nam 1975* is superior to any similar game on any other console, but the Neo-Geo is capable of better things. Just take a look at the pictures of *Magician Lord* for example.

Nevertheless, it's gameplay that really counts and it's here that the game excels.

*Nam 1975* makes no pretence to a deep and meaningful game, it's all about fast reactions. The first level is fairly straightforward and *Operation Wolf* levels present a real challenge, the point where you find yourself glad that there's a save time play option. It's an addictive game which will now doubt be popular when it's released in the arcades.

Perhaps the biggest fault with the game are the memory card options. If you use these a lot it won't take long to complete — although the game is far from easy. When you're paying more than £100 for a game you want something that's going to take more than a week or two of solid playing to complete.

Robin Candy

81



# AN MACHINE



## BASEBALL STARS: PROFESSIONAL



The first thing to tell you about this game is the sound, or rather the speech. It's not just the occasional sizzle, the game seems to be permanently telling you that it's a "fine day for baseball," or a shout in the sky or "that's a well hit ball and it should be in there for a single" and other such things. The quality of the sound is

every bit as good as anything else that's appeared in the console.

The actual game is a pretty standard baseball game. You can choose your own team from a list of players. But since all their performance and physical stats are written in Japanese it's impossible to tell if you've chosen a good team (unless you



can read Japanese, of course). There's the obligatory baseball league and a two-player game option and... or that's about it really.

The presentation of the game is faultless — lots of nice graphics and music — but that doesn't hide the fact that there isn't that much to actually do, especially when your team is losing. Then it's just a case of pressing the fire button at the right time. Pitching and fielding is a bit more involving but even then it doesn't require much skill to pitch or catch the ball.

As baseball games go it's not a bad effort, but it's not the sort of game that's going to make you go out and buy a New Geo.

Robin Candy

75%



## MAGICIAN LORD

Visually, this is the most stunning of the initial batch of Neo-Geo games, but it isn't really the visual beauty for the player. In fact one of the main charms of the game is the desire to see what the next level looks like.

As the title of the game suggests, you play the part of a magician (not wizard, those fans is to progress through several weird and wonderful worlds for a final showdown with an all-powerful magician. *Magician Lord* is best described as an arcade adventure/platform game. The game is mostly confined to defeating bosses, or negotiating deviously positioned platforms, but there's more than enough going on to keep both the most seasoned arcade adventurer occupied.

You start the game as a lean-built, shooting wizard but can quickly change your persona into something more formidable. Scattered throughout the playing area are magic potions which transform you into a totally different character.

In your new game as the King Wizard, Dragon Lord or Ice Wizard you are equipped with a new weapon and increased resistance to enemy hit, it doesn't take long before you've got your own favourite character, but the game is designed so that no single character is suited to all the problems you'll encounter. For instance, the fire-breathing Dragon Lord is great at taking the boss-dropping balls that start to rain against the guardians at the end of level one.

At the bottom of the screen are two bars. These indicate your current physical and weapons strength. Every time you die or hit as many (but it breaks something you shouldn't), your physical strength is depleted. Needless to say, when it reaches zero your character dies. Your strength can be increased by collecting extra or-



gy capsules or collecting a transformation potion (an added bonus of transforming is that your strength returns to full). However, if your strength falls below a certain level you will be changed back into the poorly equipped wizard.

The weapons bar indicates how many shots your character will fire with each press of the fire button. You can only increase your firepower by collecting a weapons power-up and there's a maximum of three simultaneous shots per character. If you're unfortunate enough to lose a life, not only will you lose all your power-ups, but your character will be transported to

an earlier stage of the game.

Out of the three Neo-Geo games reviewed, this is the hardest to play and the one with the most frequent appeal. The transformation potions are a good idea since they add a whole new dimen-

sion to the game. As with any great game the only minor point is that it can get very frustrating when you've failed to get past a certain screen for the hundredth time.

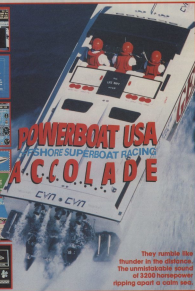
Robin Candy

88%

The Neo-Geo was supplied by PG Engine Supplies: 22281 Waterline Road, Colindale, Middlesex TW9 1PS, Staffordshire ST16 6PS. Tel: 01930 712755.



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Screens shown from IBM and CIBM disk versions.

# The Games machine

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Photo: Office of the Editor (Covers)



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Clever, Mr. Spy, but not quite clever enough

# SLY SPY: SECRETS OF THE COUNCIL

It's a tough life being a spy. What with the constant jumping out of airplanes, high speed car chases and rescuing starve banana things are not easy. But there's no doubt who the best man for the job is: Sly Spy.

The Council for World Domination (CWD) are threatening to detonate a nuclear bomb at the first world doesn't surrender. The American Government needs for spy spy.

The game starts in true James Bond style with Sly being kicked out of a plane. Luckily for us, wearing a parachute, but unluckily CWD agents are trying to shoot us left life. You start with a laser pistol and a full clip of ammunition. After disposing of the enemy agents, you land safely in Washington. But even on the ground you're not clear of you.

GOOD MORNING, AGENT 0-9-1

COUNCIL FOR WORLD DOMINATION  
TERRORISTS HAVE INFILTRATED  
THE CITY ...

GET THEM BEFORE THEY KILL  
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# SECRET AGENT

OCEAN

**GAME** **SPY:**  
**SECRET AGENT**  
**PRODUCER** OCEAN  
**VERSIONS**

AMIGA	\$24.99
ATARI ST	\$24.99
CS4	\$3.99/\$14.99
SPECTRUM	\$3.99/\$14.99
CPC	\$3.99/\$14.99

ATARI ST

87%

Very close to the arcade original, in this black-bow tie, white shirt and black trousers, Sly cuts a suave figure amid the money ruffians. Sound is also impressive with a selection of tunes and sound effects that complement the snoring mayhem.

AMIGA

87%

Similar to the ST in almost all respects. Spend time should purchase.

SPECTRUM

85%

Although not as pretty as the 16-bit games, it is every bit as playable. All of the eight levels have been examined in (no mean feat), and both character and background sprites are colorful, well drawn and smoothly animated. Spectrum owners need not worry about the lack of good software — Ocean always comes up with the goods.



Mr. Walking past the Lincoln Memorial you soon get the feeling you're being watched — and then shot at! — so the sooner you get to your motorcycle the better.

Headquarters inform you that one of the CNG bosses has been sighted so you must 'soak' off after him. Jet packers and ruffians on motorcycles try to kill you, so it's just as well you stopped off at Special Forces to

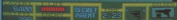


pick up some 'special' weapons. Such weapons include a machine gun and a golden gun (in five pieces).

There are eight levels in all (the sky diving and Lincoln Memorial sections are counted as one), most taking horrendously scrolling Runescape-type stages.

The arcade version, whilst being crickingly good, wasn't exactly bristling with being an arcade conversion. Software Creations couldn't alter any of the computer game content, however, they have made the game more playable. It is blatantly obvious where Sly Spy's inspiration comes from, and it's probably the best secret agent game so far. Let's hope Comark's *The spy who Loved Me* can create the same kind of fun.

Mark Cawood



But where's Burt Reynolds?

# DELIVERANCE STORMLORD II

HEWSON



**T**he Realm of the Mighty Stormlord, a magical medieval land that once knew peace and prosperity, its modest people worked buxins, looked after their neighbour and lived happily. But this was before the evil Black Queen turned her gaze toward the Realm. She captured the many magical faeries which helped protect and keep order in the land, and put hordes of her demonic minions in their place.

As leader of both the peace-keepers and the community as a whole, it was Stormlord's job to fight off the Queen's monsters and free the faeries. Though it was a tough and dangerous task, he entered into the fray with gusto and battled on till the Realm was restored to its former glory. With the Black Queen defeated, the people celebrated. Life was good again... for a while.

But now there's a new threat. The Black Queen may be gone but her followers live on, dedicated in her memory to her ways: pure evil and an obsessive desire to rule over Stormlord's Realm. To this end they've combined their powers and captured the faeries (they really get venomous, don't they?). They've spread them through strange and foul lands, unfamiliar to the faeries, who can't find their way back to their homes in the Realm. Naturally, Stormlord must save the day.

You begin in the sweltering, claustrophobic pits of hell and, collecting hovering faeries on the way, must progress to heaven. The faeries' minds have been refocused and consumed by the foul new places and creatures surrounding them, so it's only this most pure of places that can restore them to their usual peace-loving selves.

Each level is composed of platform nar-

rows which you navigate with the aid of Stormlord's mighty ability of multiple jumps. He can effectively stay in the air, jumping up to three times in a row before falling back to the ground. Flames, spikes, acid drops, poisonous gas bubbles and bouncing eggs are just some of the hazards you must avoid using this ability.

You can fire the small arrow-shaped missiles Stormlord carries as the vampire, bombs, goblets, nearly cupids and trolls but can also use limited supplies of more powerful weapons. These are collected simply by touching them, as are the faeries.

Between levels, extra lives can be gained in a bonus round. Faeries by advice you and if touched release a gold coin; a life is awarded for every ten coins collected. This isn't as easy as it sounds because his jump-on-air ability doesn't work, but instead Stormlord can drop hearts to stand

GAME DELIVERANCE  
STORMLORD II  
PRODUCER HEWSON  
VERSIONS

CGA	£10.99/£14.99
SPECTRUM	£10.99/£14.99
CPC	£10.99/£14.99

SPECTRUM

78%

Graphics are pleasant, but not packed with detail. Stormlord himself the best, most mythical looking character. He's also the best animated, stomping deftly along. There's plenty of colour, minimal music and smooth scrolling. Theme music is suitably epic and the game's packed full of energetic effects.

on. The bonus level is cut short if you touch a patrolling dragon but in other parts of the game it can be tamed and the warrior can ride on its back.

Parlance Cocco has created some great games in the past, originally programmed for the Spectrum but excellently converted to CGA and later to 16-bit machines. His last creation was the original Stormlord, a highly enjoyable platform arcade adventure I reviewed way back in T104/81.

Unfortunately I can't quite live from Mr Cocco has been spending his time. Deliverance is by no means a bad game, the opposite if anything, but it doesn't live up to the excellence of its predecessor. It sacrifices the speed and exposition puzzle elements for pure arcade. Off, devious jumps, pixel perfect precision sometimes necessary, and expert timing, particularly when performing double and triple jumps, are the order of the day here. Shoot-on-up elements are dropped up, too, with more monsters to blast and a wide variety of weapons to do it with.

Deliverance is an average R/L Cocco release, but as he's one of the better, more imaginative Spectrum programmers this means it's still a good, playable platform game.

Warren Lapworth





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**T**housands of millions of years ago, the golden entity known only as The Keeper finally moved from a slumber many thought would never end. He left his powerful servant, Prager, to a new and feature planet, Unreal. Prager took the living eggs, the four ancient elements (earth, air, fire and water) and the two guardians (one good, one evil) to the world.

But Prager collided with a comet as he entered Unreal's atmosphere, destroying himself and scattering all he carried, without Prager's wisdom to guide them,



the two guardians battled for control of the world and mastered the elements.

One of Prager's eggs was lost and came to rest in a quiet valley where humans reside and Arshan was later born. They befriended a copper dragon who regularly visited them. When the dragon didn't arrive one day, Arshan went looking for him and was captured by the dark guardian. Overwhelmed by his beauty, he decided to marry her and she agreed, on condition he do not hurt her people.

Arshan and the dragon heard about the wedding and agreed to join forces to defeat the guardian, who lived in a faraway castle. With a magical sword, they would destroy the four elements that gave the guardian life and face unknown enemies on the way to his castle.

Arshan and the dragon's quest is split into five 3-D levels and three 2-D ones. The first is 3-D and you guide the dragon as he flies into the scene. Obstacles (wood) have to be dodged and dinosaurs (fossil) with fiery breath. You begin with 99 points of energy, reduced by hazards but increased by diamond-shaped bonus crystals. Energy is gained from level to level by collecting crystals in highly visible, particularly as it increases dragon firepower.

Gliding down in the forest, the journey is continued on foot as Arshan for level two. The screen scrolls as he strides rightward, flipping every third sword or so, but you can release your footpads. This is often essential to activate triggers or collect items that will solve a puzzle. However, for the most part, 3-D sections are made up from hacking and slashing action. Characters to jump over, vines to swing from and moving logs to leap between and just a few of the hazards to be negotiated.

Obstacles are rife with Arshan's trusty sword but the process can be speeded up by slipping the magical weapons in the flames of any fire. For a limited period, it becomes the fireword, which at its highest strength can shoot fireballs. From occasional resources, it can even become a waterword.

Back to the skies for 3-D levels three and four, along the river and over its waters, then raging winds and slippery surfaces complicate matters in the 3-D enemy wastes of level five. Back to dragon

flight for the next two levels, across a lava sea to the outer balconies of the guardian's castle. Then level eight, for the final confrontation between Arshan and the bad guardian's forces.

I was impressed by preview screenshots of Unreal but that was several months ago and I was beginning to lose hope. Here it is here — and it's been worth the wait. Like Scott's latest creation breaking new ground in the field of sword and sorcery games.

Harder than level after level of horizontally scrolling hacking, this must have done and are continuing to do. Unreal's cleverly programmed 3-D dragon flight levels provide variety and introduce to the more basic-looking sections. The flying levels are difficult and quite exciting but they're too long and there's too many of them, instead will save.

The horizontal sections are much more than sword swinging, although it's the main objective. The precise timing and positioning needed to make jumps from vines and logs in the cause of great frustration when you fail time and time again but it what makes you play again, determined to succeed and triumph when the sub-section is complete. Puzzles are new to hack-'em-up

Hey, wow, it's like—

# UNREAL

UBISOFT

games and while they're not particularly hardcore here, they take some time to work out.

Unreal's highly challenging so it's just as well there's a save game option, three saves per disk and accessible at any time. This feature is typical of the attention to detail and quality of Unreal, another great Ubi Soft game.

Warren Lapworth

**GAME UNREAL**  
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AMIGA

86s

An attractive interface title screen leads to a lava sea and rotating objects constructed from bubbles on the option/credits screen. The 3-D sections are fast and smooth but objects, although well formed, are grainy — the price to pay for convincing 3-D. 3-D sections scroll in smooth parallax and make excellent use of cubes, some beautiful scenes made from carefully graduated skies and delicately drawn trees and marshes. Arkan's rather ordinary but sound effects are great, bird and animal noises setting an atmosphere.



Gremlin go green

# VENUS THE VAMPIRE

**V**enus. The Planet goes far into the future, where the problem of global warming has to take second place to an even greater danger: but one also caused by man's selfish use of harmful chemicals, in order to grow higher and more profitable crop yields, vast quantities of artificial pesticides have been used to curb the insect population. The bug killing has gone so far that every species of insect has become extinct.

All first, the British colonized, his insects to bottle you during the summer, to arrive in the garden. The insects were exotic, no bugs and no larvae to damage crops, no need to waste money on expensive chemicals to eradicate them.

But the more intelligent and intelligent user a game problem. Small and intelligent they may have been but they were vital to the lower part of the food chain. Creatures who ate insects to survive died out, those animals who ate them gave in to starvation — animals humans ate to stay alive. Vegetables and artificial foods couldn't be produced in sufficient quantity to plug the ever-increasing gap in the market.

To prevent the mass starvation of man,

there was only one course of action: genetic engineers had to produce this new insect to eat the food chain. They worked diligently, 24 hours a day. They had to — he depended on it. Their hard work fruitfully paid off and here the first man-made insect they subtly adjusted DNA to produce various different types. The food chain was repaired and gradually life returned to normal.

Well, almost. Something went wrong with some of the insect species. They were infected with a mutant virus which caused them to grow in size, strength and, most alarming, hostility. They devoured crops with remarkable speed and tenacity — but



another much too dangerous to humans and the insects had already been feared about overuse of pesticides. So a weapon that could defend the mutated insects, there is with them, was created. A truly artificial creature, the mutant robotic grasshopper-like called Venus was given the ability to take on board different types of weapons to suit whatever situation a level had in. Adaptability would be the key to survival and the eradication of all the vile mutant insects.

As you'll have guessed from the game's title, Venus has been placed in your capable hands. There are ten different areas of the world that are infected with the mutant insects and each of these is divided into five levels. Levels must be completed within a time limit and are made up from varying heights and lengths of platforms, punctuated by bottomless pits. Some levels start in true continuity between and naturally, with the grasshopper looks, can jump long distances, the traps invisible while in mid-air.

Venues in saws, ladders, wooden, catapults and other most limited weapons, some of which fire missiles, pop-up the levels, some crushing, others jumping on the spot and another attack by flying. Contact with either the insects or the projectiles deducts one segment of energy from the four-part life meter. When all segments are extinguished, the real fat results in the loss of one of three lives.

And it's not just insects that are dangerous. Plants infected by them have mutated, too, into killing, more intelligent vegetation is to choose IV (poison), and for some reason the humans have come in to lower automatic defense measures active. The most dangerous means, though, is a mutated jump — falling down is as close a life as matter how much energy Venus has at the time.

Venus has an unlimited supply of missiles to spit out and insect insects require a number of hits from these before they're exterminated. However, all but the smallest have formed a metallic pod, which when shot becomes a collectable bonus, often a more powerful weapon. These can be big (but surely a stronger version of the standard missile), three- or four-way firing, mortar (especially accurate) shells or beam-up. The problem with the stronger weapons is that they must be limited quantity, so they must be regularly collected to replenish supplies.



didn't stop there. They began attacking animals and people, too, overwhelming them with their numbers, possessing their knowledge with all its much knowledge as they did vegetation. At first it was just trees and forest insects they killed but then they began moving toward towns and cities in great swarms. Something had to be done.

Conventional weapons were not the



# FLYTRAP

[illegible]

but collected weapons, even for family traditional business with the American army.

The bonus revealed that almost as much as energy, it can be energy in small forms, which follow straight, the bigger the form, the more energy is released, or even life. Bonus points, every time or almost, which point increasingly like a short time. The system brings in question mark can give it of them or do the thing on you and receive the chance to show the second.



However, unusual controls are essential to progress in all certain times, when most of us fly by capabilities to have unique views from positions at the top of the system. Left and right work as normal but down is jump, inverted positions don't offer a sideways or down.

Foot tips in the tips of the paws where the toes have special double-serve, gravity-normal lines on the ground, and fall back again when touched, most of them. Other feet include magnets, the shoe horns, principal, super-jump, tugger and longer hand, continuous jump, three-toes of the snout, being in the in the present and true line. The latter the foot speeds up the rate at which the toes counts down — when it goes out, a little fast.

Folded apterys are held in secret rooms, but they nearly live up to their name. Doorways to the rooms are completely invisible and only open when Venus jumps into them. A number of platforms fill the secret-rooms rooms, each with at least one and two, but Venus only had a short time before he is spotted back into the hole.

[illegible]

The right-most version of Versus (the song by Don Pate's *Awards*) is right in the theme as I enter the puzzle 15, to be precise) and its computer game incarnation occurred to all were later in the following March — the film, in June.

Verus: The Alpha is built upon simple, strong and stout steel, but it is no other the odd, uncomplicated, powerful design proves to be the most gripping. Just ascending the mountain's steep is an impressive job.

Their height, length and durability means they're capable of more adaptable and fluidly to handle aerial writing than probably any other computer game character. Indeed, in early levels you're your own worst enemy, for some help is here from by underengineering jumps and falling into pits that be otherwise avoidable.

There aren't many types of sleeping, crawling apparatuses to have but they prove more than tough enough, especially the Pups, ultra-extended rescue environment or later books. Luckily there's a good spread of supports to destroy them with, big shot being the substance of the air, and it's good being able to reach. Continue them at your own risk.

Walking on the 'cooler' (inspired by Jeff Miller's *Asphalt*) is highly disconcerting at first — you find yourself using your hand to feel safe as you make it across — and makes jumping difficult. The gently curved slope that you face here are the most friendly of the special lane surfaces. Finally, however,



are infinitely stretching, super jumps are scorching and time loss means you'll have to dash around to complete the level in time. The assignments become very devious. Rather in the game to old have to be extra careful where you land!

Together with the bonus rooms, jazy fills out to lively and the challenging, but slightly underplayed about teenage romance, *Yancy*. The Flynn is a very big and action-packed arcade game. Presentation and attention to detail are high but this is made good in the amazing playability — truly addictive. *Yancy* is one that you really must catch.

<b>GAME VENUS THE FLYTRAP</b>	
<b>PRODUCER GRENIN GRAPHICS</b>	
<b>VERSIONS</b>	
AMIGA	£19.95
ATARI ST	£19.95

Year	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
1990	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
1991	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
1992	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
1993	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
1994	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
1995	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0

95

The pace-setting introduction is pleasing, well accompanied by bright, animated guitar and keyboard accompaniment. The lyrics are smoothly collected, graduated and paradigmatic, and appear as detailed and excellently situated. The huge amounts of the famous short-appearing section and later letters are highly impressive by Veruca himself (Beverly) in the star of the show, the heroine, takes his feet, rubs his face and flutters his wings as he goes on his travels and his distinctive crawling motion is brilliant. Smooth three-layer patterned scrolling is used in the short-appearing stage, golden shaded colors are preferred to be black. The style is decorated with numerous colorful-painted patterns, using the same strange and spooky to match the creepy, tiny.



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**Find out its limits.  
Look in the mirror.**





Introducing the powerful new Atari 1040 STE. With such an awesome machine, we're convinced the only limit you'll come across are your own.

Based on the incredibly successful 1040 STFM, the 1040 STE itself goes beyond the limits of its predecessor.

The 'E', by the way, stands for 'Enhanced'. But once you've discovered its amazing array of features, you may consider 'Enhanced' to be the understatement of the decade.

Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the 1040 STE is its graphics. Its palette contains over 4000 colours (all right, 4096 to be exact).

To ensure precise and realistic images, the STE features 'hardware scrolling', enabling smooth scrolling in any direction and split-screen effects. And, with the SM124 monitor, you'll get razor sharp black-out-of-white text that's as clear as the type on this page.

To complete the picture, it is able to 'phase-lock' its video output to an external video source, permitting direct linking to a Genlocking device.

The 1040 won't just have your eyes swirling in their sockets. Your eardrums will also take a pounding from the 8-bit PCM stereo sound.

The new PCM (Pulse Coded Modulation) sound system's two chips allow the 1040 STE to replay high-quality sampled sounds, in stereo, without burdening the CPU. Or, for even more of an earbattering, just add a couple of RCA output jacks and power the sounds through your own stereo.

Of course we mustn't forget memory. One megabyte of RAM comes as standard. If that's not enough, the 1040 STE provides four SIMM sockets. Simply plug in some SIMM (Single In-Line Memory Module) boards and boost the RAM up to four megabytes.

To help you handle all this technology, we've added even more: a Blitter chip, capable of shifting data at high speeds independent of the CPU, and a new version of TOS.

The TOS 1.0 (operating system) has an enhanced file selector with drive-change buttons, improved desktop with file move, MS-DOS compatible disk formatting, and better application installation and auto-booting facilities.

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With adaptors, up to six people can use the 1040 at one time. Just in case it's too much for one person to handle.

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## TREASURE TRAP

ELECTRONIC ZOO

GAME TREASURE TRAP	
PRODUCER ELECTRONIC ZOO	
VERSIONS	
AMIGA	\$19.99
ATARI ST	\$19.99
PC	\$24.99

AMIGA

85%

TGM  
STAR  
PLAYER

**O**n 19 January, 1996, a fortune in gold was lost when the vessel *Kumonde* sank after her boiler room mysteriously exploded. All hands were saved, but *Kumonde* now lies 300 feet down in one of the most dangerous parts of the ocean. For years, it lay undisturbed, until 1990 when world famous explorer Howard Kelly decided to try and salvage the gold from its hold. Of course, at 300 feet normal diving gear is useless, a scuba deep sea diving suit and brass helmet are needed.

The game starts with a standard diving gear screen the ocean and sinking your character into the unfriendly waters. *Kumonde* contains over 100 rooms,



viewed isometrically (Knight Lane style), and every one must be visited.

Because of the fairly jagged edges on the ship, the usual deep sea air hose can't be used, bottled air must be carried instead. But this very quickly runs out, so the other bottles scattered around must be collected.

Against you are a range of aquatic creatures. These include crabs, eels, jellyfish and sharks. You aren't armed, but you're not defenceless. Two giant fish are provided at the start and when unleashed rip into the opposition with great ease. In most of the rooms you'll find gold bars. Some are in seemingly inaccessible

places, but by shifting the scenery around they can be reached. With every 80 bars collected an extra smart fish is awarded.

Also lying around are keys which allow access to certain areas of the ship. The



the up tempo version *Rox, Rox, Your Best* takes you smoothly into the game. The main character is without a doubt the star of the game. The way he waddles along his perky little body, looking not too dissimilar to our own Phil King on *ZZAP!* magazine, is most entertaining in itself. The graphics are well defined, with neat bubbles floating from Howard Kelly's helmet. Sound effects are similarly comprehensive and make the game a real fun package.

keys come in several different shapes: spheres, squares and triangles amongst them. This access problem, combined with the massive play area, brings a great deal of strategy into *Treasure Trap*.

I haven't seen a second *Head Over Heels* game for a long while, and this is sure to suffice for months to come. If you love a challenge, *Treasure Trap* will fit the bill. (There's nothing shiny about this purchase (green).)

Mark Cawwell

GAME VENOM WING  
PRODUCER THALAMUS  
VERSIONS  
AMIGA \$19.99

AMIGA

80%



**A**s one of the plots of the future, you're the best. You've survived countless battles with endless enemy ships and huge, grotesque monsters. But even you haven't dared the heavily armed fortress network. Many have tried, risking life and limb for the unimaginable wealth

ants, but happily is one of the same, high-quality versions of those short-lived designs. *Venom Wing's* originality is in its odd-numbered levels. Having to immediately tackle a big monster is odd, but they are very big, as is indicated by the fact they have to be scooted through — they're

**A game with real bite**

# VENOM WING

THALAMUS

held inside, but none have returned.

The riches don't appeal to you — you reject material values and have more than enough money anyway — but the challenge of the fortress is a temptation you finally can't resist. Boarding your space fighter, the *Venom Wing*, you fly towards the first fortress, wondering whether this time you've pushed your luck too far.

The first of three intelligible four levels is unusual in that it's a static screen where you attack one huge, multi-segmented fortress that gradually scrolls downwards, rather like inevitably losing the end-of-level nasty from a progressive, hot-bloodedly scoring shoot-'em-up. A giant lady, a gargoyle, snakes and more attack before the fortress launches its last defence, a dropship. Level three is similar, with a giant Alien statue holding a missile-firing planet on its shoulders.

Even-numbered levels are more traditional, waves of alien and ground-based gun emplacements firing at you as you fly rightward. Level two is a slimy tunnel, filled with intelligent plants, while level four is a high-tech fortress.

To help you, there are the usual power-up rooms to collect, released whenever all segments of a slim, snake-like creature are shot. The first coin picked up gives triple fire and the second a small drone (similar to the one in *Antistar*), which can be controlled by a second player. A third transforms the *Venom Wing* into an invulnerable plant eagle for a limited time, which has the disadvantage of not being able to fire.

*Venom Wing* is one more in the growing number of 16-bit 4-Player/2-Player vari-

ants, the largest 'sprites' in any video game.

The small number of add-on weapons is disappointing but the two-player team option makes the drone a lot more interesting, and the invisible eagle is very useful in places. Even with these facilities, *Venom Wing* is tough. It'll take several attempts to complete level one and then the next level too will occupy you for a long, long time.

*Venom Wing* is one of the better Amiga horizontal shooters and is probably the most challenging. Care to try your luck?

**Steven Lagworth**



Amos win the World Cup battle

# KICK OFF 2

AMCO

The England versus Belgium match is raging as I write, but in the software industry there's a football issue far more eagerly awaited: the arrival of the sequel to Amos's highly-acclaimed soccer game, Kick Off. After numerous delays and much anticipation (particularly from ZCZP's toilet addict, Phil 'tator' King), programmer Dave Orr's finally completed Kick Off 2.



The basic game is the same. The pitch is viewed from above but the screen only shows a fraction of it, thus it scrolls with the ball, following the action. To keep track of the match, a transparent HUD-like 'radar' (visible in size) marks the positions of the ball and all footballers.

Unlike most football games, the ball is free-running rather than fixed to dribbling controls; first, it has to be pushed along. Pressing fire with the ball at your feet 'traps' the ball, enabling it to be accurately passed, chipped and shooting determined by how long the fire button's held down. Screen-kicks are a new feature and aftertouch allows the ball's direction to be influenced after it's left your feet (just like on disks Time).

Unless the ball's overhead, in which case you jump for a header, pressing fire when the ball's not in your possession makes a sliding tackle. Fouls can result in yellow or red cards, of course, and now fouls just outside the opposition's box result in set-piece freekicks. When taking a freekick, the ball can be dragged over, passed to a nearby player or curved in an attempt to fool the defending side.

If you score a goal you're particularly proud of, you can replay it at normal speed or slow motion, and even save it to disk. Saved goals can be edited to compile your own Custom Goals disk.

Rather than just being able to choose your formation, game preparation in Kick Off 2 allows you to select your team, including two substitutes, from an entire squad. Rather than playing as the whole team, switching between the players nearest the ball, you can leave the computer to control most of the team and just play in your favourite position.

Other pre-game options allow the alteration of pitch size, offside ball speed and sources, match duration, wind strength, tactics (right available), others can be loaded in from Player Manager) and skill level (which can enable Player Manager teams to be tested in). Kick's time and penalty shoot-

outs can be switched on to prevent drawn matches.

However, the most variable option is Kit Design. The two colours of any team's kit can be changed and used upon different shirt designs: vertical, diagonal or horizontal stripes, for examples.

You can practice with just a goalkeeper and real matches can be single or international friendly, or part of an eight-player league or limited-cup competition. By choosing to play in particular positions, two people can play in the same team against the computer, or, with a joystick expansion interface, against two other humans.

The Special Events option allows team/match/league data to be loaded in, and the six groups of World Cup '90 tournament are included in the full-priced ST/Average Kick Off 2. Any team can be player-controlled, but if you're not particularly interested, a version without the World Cup data will be available for £10.95.

I've seen as many football games in the past three months as I have seen in the rest of my life. I praise the Lord that Kick Off 2's finally here to put them at their place but I must confess I'm quite disappointed with it — it's too much like the original, and even more the Kick Off expanded with the Extra Time rule disk.

Penalty shoot outs and set-piece freekicks enhance the realism and depth of matches and constantly replaying a good goal is the perfect way to create a friend — particularly if you save it afterwards. The Kit Design option isn't quite as flexible as it'd like but it allows you to really create a strip you can personally identify with.

As in the original, dribbling's hard to master but playability is ridiculously high. If you haven't got its predecessor and Five Time, it's an essential purchase and if you have it's still worth thinking about. Probably the best sports game too.

Warren Lapworth

## GAME KICK OFF 2 PRODUCER AMCO VERSIONS

AMIGA	£19.95*
ATARI ST	£19.95*
PC	£24.95
CGA	£9.95/£14.95
SPECTRUM	£9.95/£14.95
AMSTRAD	£9.95/£14.95
(*£10.95 with World Cup '90 data)	

AMIGA

92

Sprites are plain but functional and well animated. Scrolling's smooth and ball movement realistic, although the spots on it wander around randomly. Physics are nothing to look at but then they're only strokes of grass. Sound effects are the same dated bunch of samples heard on Kick Off, but without the speech.



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**Y**ou've competed against friends in yet the best lap times in racing games, and even gone head-to-head with them in spin-screen affairs like the classic *Phase II*. But have you dared as a team? No, I thought not.

It's the motorcycle and sidecar combination (combo) occasionally seen on sports programmes that makes such a two-

down to the back while view points show points and rankings so far. Car select lets you choose between five and 20 laps per race, in multiple of five, and track editor too, you create your own circuits.

Control of the combo is simplicity itself, usual convention applying for the six gear cycle/sidecar. Speed, revs and gear are shown below the track while lap times,

GAME COMBO RACER	
PRODUCER GREMLIN GRAPHICS	
VERSIONS	
AMIGA	£24.99
ATARI ST	£24.99

AMIGA

83%

A neat digitised cartoon picture backs the clearly laid out, easy to use options screens — the track designer being especially professional in look and use. In general, roadies are a bit bland but road perspective's fine, obstacles move smoothly from the horizon and striping ground gives a reasonable sensation of movement. The combo spins is nice, particularly with the sidecar than leaning around as it speeds along, and gears, ground or snow is thrown up when it veers off the track — a neat touch. Title music is pleasingly alternate and although the engine noise becomes as irritating as in any other racing game, crash sounds are good.

**Two heads are better than one**

# COMBO RACER

GREMLIN GRAPHICS



player game possible, and is one of the very few vehicles not to have been included in a game before. The concept is very simple. The bike rider steers and controls the speed of the ground-hugging cycle while, in their equally sleek sidecar, the passenger shifts his weight for optimum cornering and speed.

The main menu has seven options, the first simply to select the number of players — in a single player game the computer automatically moves the sidecar rider into the correct position. *Practice* is just that, on any of the eight available courses, and prepares you for real competition after *Begin session*. This opens up a sub-menu where session data can be saved and loaded, tracks saved and player names entered and selected. *New race* gets you

positions and a map, which marks the positions of all competitors on the circuit, are superimposed on the sky. *Crashes* increase the combo's damage percentage, which decreases its maximum speed. Controlling the sidecar that is easy, left and right moving has to be the corresponding side of the vehicle. For taking corners, he should be moved towards the apex of the bend.

Previously created tracks can be uploaded into the track editor to play in a session or adjust fast. Alternatively, tracks can be deleted altogether, allowing a circuit to be made from scratch. This is done using nine icons (five options deal with saving, loading etc), for curves, straights, tunnels and slopes. Slopes are defined with use of an isometric view at the lower right of the screen, which replaces the map view of the track normally seen there. Finally the background is chosen from City, Desert, Winter, Japan, Rio, Moon, Black Forest and others.

Well, any software house wanting an original vehicle for their racing game are going to be a bit stumped. I thought the stripped-down duo cars of *Power Delt* were pretty strange but the motorcycle and sidecar combination, despite being a known machine, is more unusual still.

In a one-player game, playability is higher than most racers but not exceptional. It's helped by user-friendly touches like being able to put the qualifying laps when you think you've got a good enough time, and the levelled season option. But it's with the second player that

*Combo Racer* comes into its own. Player one has most of the job to do — steering, accelerating, changing gear and braking — but his times and place in the race (if not his life) are in the hands of the sidecar man, if he's correctly positioned, speed and particularly cornering are seriously affected, sometimes to the point of the combo being most of the time, bodies flying through the air.

Track designers have been done before but the one in *Combo Racer* is by far the easiest to use. Just a few dozen clicks of the mouse and a track is made, complete with bends, tunnels and players. It's best not to go too mad until you're fully used to the game otherwise you'll find yourself crashing off corners of your own making!

Although aesthetically it isn't the best, the two-player team option and explore track editor put *Combo Racer* in a class of its own.

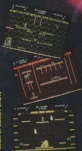
**Wendell Lapworth**



# YOLANDA

by Steve Bob

THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE



STAGE BY STAGE SNAKES

Attention game freaks! So you think you rate as a good games player? Well think again! You're nowhere until you try *Yolanda*. The fastest and most difficult platform game ever.

You take the part of *Yolanda*, offspring of the mighty Hercules himself, cursed by the death goddess. Here to be slayed by all mankind, your only hope of living the curse is to re-match the mighty skills of Hercules - and that's going to take all the speed, strength and reflexes it's possible for a mortal to survive.

You'll get the chance to get up to speed in the specially designed 'trainer' level, then it's straight down to some of the fastest platform action you can ever likely to experience.

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- Unique trainer level for beginners.
- Random level selection - you'll have to stay on your toes.
- Jay-stick twitching gameplay that'll keep you coming back for more.
- Game design by the legendary Steve Bob.
- Available from the end of July 1990 for the Atari ST and the Commodore Amiga. Price £19.99.

*Light years ahead*



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AMIGA

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Will Guffy be caught by the Plonkin Donkins?

# FLOOD

ELECTRONIC ARTS



There's water here, and lots of it. Not just a few droplets, but bucket loads of the stuff. With so much water it's not surprising there's a Buiting involved in these adventures, which the programming team (Buiting has created here is an underground level sometimes underwater) adventure of large — not quite epic — proportions.

Poor Guffy, a little could guess what, is still in shock. The rest of his people have been killed by a species of evil enemies leaving Guffy the sole survivor of his important race. Important because Guffy was nothing but refuse, making him an essential part of the planet. If his species were to disappear the planet would become a total wasteland.

There's only one way out of this hell hole. Guffy must reach the top of the cavern he is in, and find the existence of other Guffy vessels. And time is short, the planet is falling apart around his ears, and the cavern is filling up with water.

As Guffy tries to escape, he must eat all the trash at his path. A courier informs Guffy how much rubbish is left to munch, and he can't leave the planet till it's all gone.

Trying to prevent Guffy are assorted evil monsters: people like the Bulbous Healed King, Lumpy Wanderer and Plonkin Donkin (?). However, one of the worst offenders is his own aunt! She starts to chase him as he takes too long clearing a

cavern, just her touch will sap your energy supplies, and the only thing you can do is distract her.

Also creating a time limit is the water. As soon as you set foot on the screen, it starts to fill up with the blue stuff. Of course, this can prove pretty useful when trying to reach some of the trash, as you can swim across it. But most of the time it will just annoy and take away from your much needed resources.

As with most underground caverns, nowadays, there are hordes of weapons scat-



## REVIEWS

GAME FLOOD  
PRODUCER ELECTRONIC ARTS  
VERSIONS  
AMIGA £24.99  
ATARI ST £24.99

AMIGA

76%

The silly title here complements this strange — not in concept, in design — game. Although the main characters of Flood are distinct and colorful, it's a great disappointment that a more realistic water effect couldn't have been implemented (as promised). However, the laughs and quirks in the game make it quite an attractive package for platform players.



tered around the place. Picking up things like grenades, mines, shrunken and large items (these can do nothing but help your escape).

Once you've collected all the trash from the cavern, you can jump in a transporter and travel to another part of the underground world.

After the innovative *Physioid*, Flood is definitely a step sideways for Buiting. All they've produced here is a platform collection-up. Nothing original whatsoever. However, the game is playable and full of extra features designed to make it a bit different. And although there's plenty to map, I have my doubts over its lasting.

Mark Gaskell

DOFT comes of age

# BSS JANE SEYMOUR

You're not amused, it was bad enough that, as a leading Commander of the Federation, you were sent on a mission that took you far from Earth, a 17-year round trip. But then it all went terribly wrong. A collision in an asteroid belt forced you to abandon your damaged ship and continue your journey in a small escape craft.

And now you've been awakened from slumber to find yourself not in orbit around Earth but drifting near a stranded Federation biological survey ship, the B55 Jane Seymour. Your escape craft has been diverted so that you can rescue the ship, its crew and cargo.

The disaster means your craft has insufficient fuel to reach home so, like it or not, the only way to get there is by repairing the



Seymour. All the Seymour's 14 systems, divided under the headings of the Control, Life Support, Computer and Communications, can be repaired by a strange orange fluid pod called hydroslime.

As the collection and distribution of this fluid's the main task, other repairs generally involve replacing broken or missing components of systems.

## DROIDS

**BATTLE** This robot has built-in weapon/control capabilities, so is very useful to send ahead and clear areas of hostiles.

**SENSOR** A life scanner enables it to frequently report upon the approach of life forms.

**MANITOR** A humble life droid, it cleans up any spill accident.

**FOAT** Can repair objects and help fix ship systems.

**RAT** Extremely ordinary, the rat droid has no built-in functions.

**COMPUTER** Allows you to access information in the ship's computer without actually being within reach of a terminal.

B55 Jane Seymour, the game, has 20 levels which become more complicated, more dangerous and involve more rooms and corridors as you work through them. The main screen is dominated by your view of the Seymour, shown in isometric 3-D: rooms, corridors, objects and creatures (yes, you are not alone). Panel to the right means of exploration, via mouse and pointer, four blue arrows move you one square in the appropriate direction (if the way isn't blocked) and two green ones rotate you 90° clockwise or anti-clockwise. Also at the top of the screen are what you're holding in your hands, time elapsed since the game began, your current location and a text information box.

At the bottom left are your health indicators. A face indicates your general state of

health and stamina — as they deteriorate the face becomes a skull. A cardiograph and heart visual show your heart rate, of course, but the colour of the heart indicates the amount of radiation you've absorbed, gradually becoming a lethal bright yellow. The radiation level of the current location has its own graph and a function panel has icons for whatever other screens are accessible.

The screen that's available whenever you aim is the inventory. Objects in the current location, held in your hands, clipped to your belt, worn in your backpack and in the possession of any droid robots you've met are shown. Objects are easily moved from place to place with a few clicks of the mouse.

The objects of most immediate use are passcards. Grey doors can be opened without a card but other doors require one of the same colour as themselves or a colour of a higher priority, in ascending order, red, orange, yellow, green, blue and the most useful password, white.

Passcards in your possession, the best location you're likely to need to visit is a manufacturing room. Unless you're lucky enough to find some lying around, you have to use one of these to make the milk bottle-like receptacles that can hold the precious hydroslime coolant. You can make up to six receptacles, of between one and five-



# EYEMOUR

GREMLIN GRAPHICS

**GAME** BSS JANE SEYMOUR  
**PRODUCER** GREMLIN GRAPHICS  
**VERSIONS** —  
**AMIGA** £24.99  
**ATARI ST** £24.99

AMIGA

89%

lines in opacity, but making them user-shippable. The larger the receptacle, the more expensive it is to produce (logically), so they had more room, chances of repairing a system are higher. Things and round about, eh?

Head logical part of call to the lab, where robot is shipped. But it's not just a case of pouring it into the receptacles. Hydrofixing coolant is an acidic, toxic sub-

stance the Seymour resented in the accidental opening of the cages holding the toxic beasts. What's more, the Seymour's crew have been driven mad by the radiation they've absorbed, thus they're as hostile as the aliens are.

Aliens/robots are attacked with a crosshair on the 2-D view but, so as not to make it too

usually, BSS isn't anything special. Status panels, icons etc. are clearly drawn and laid out, but, like icons and character graphics, are merely functional. The receptacle making and filling machines are the best graphics, they look highly authentic. Alien species — including such oddities as a gapping, floating jellyfish and unrelenting rock creatures — are attractively sketched and are pleasant rather than nasty beasts. Animations are average but sampled sound effects are brilliant, groans, shrieks, primer gurgles and weapon noises all of excellent quality and originality.



■ Jane Seymour (voice of Head BSS) was the inspiration for the game's cloning survey ship.

since that will weaken any line in a vessel holding it, therefore the receptacles are checked before they're filled. If they're flawed, they're rejected.

To make the repair, you have to go to the room appropriate to the division of the system you wish to go to and have a repair kit and a minimum of a litre of fluid. A coolant level meter and robot with repair capability are useful for the reparation of a system but not essential.

Played in the same random manner as any other, but a whole lot more useful, there are six types of robot scattered around the laboratory (see box). Each has four main commands, each of which is self-explanatory: stop here, follow me, power down and program. Naturally, the latter enables a number of other, more complicated commands to be initiated. These include GOTO, where the number following it specifies the room number you want the robot to go, pick up and drop both of which require the serial number of the object you want picked up/dropped. Lines of the program can be deleted and inserted and the whole series of instructions can be erased or run. Robots can be given new functions, have the same as other types of mechanism, some unique, by plugging connectors to them.

There's more danger than that from the ship's isolation level, of course. As a biological survey ship, the BSS Jane Seymour has many alien life forms on board and as such isn't too hard to die, the damage inflicted

even, it wobbles in an awkward manner, making aiming difficult. The size of the cursor and therefore the ease of aiming of a weapon depends upon its strength — the more powerful the weapon, the bigger the cursor. The disadvantage of powerful weapons is that they generally take some time to reload, leaving you wide open to attack, and apart from simple components, any weapon can run out of ammo or malfunctions.

If repairing the broken/damaged systems and surviving the onslaught of both creatures and radiation isn't enough, you must always feed the robot Luck. Without this, even if the BSS Jane Seymour's fully operational and you're in 100% health, you can't get into the navigation room and thus can't get back home to Earth.

To get the (level) criticism over with, BSS Jane Seymour's game design is highly derivative of Dungeon Master while the graphics style and scenario is reminiscent of Pandora's sci-fi variation on that game, Xenomorph. Given the quality of the former product, this is by no means a problem, and, as it's also known as Pandemonium Quest One, it's a descendant of PCRT, it was a Helms of its own.

BSS is a deal more complicated than other games of its type, the simple art of exploring and slaying alien compounds by having to find the necessary replacement components and, of course, produce receptacles and fill them with coolant. Discovering

your previous 'mole bottles' are based can be highly frustrating after battling through numerous vicious aliens!

Combat is the only pure muscle part of the game but provides enough headshots. With the uncomplicated idea of making the weapons control wobbles drastically, combat is something that requires real skill and especially timing. With a weak weapon — small cursor — it's very difficult to hit small aliens, especially the quickly phlebotomy-like bee!

Programable robots/drones are becoming increasingly popular in games, the language used is clearly the best so far but the different types of drones and cartridges mean that, in the way, BSS is equally versatile. With the many different information systems, however, its attention to detail that spreads throughout the game, BSS is a large but not vast game that will appeal greatly to catalog-reperts and arcade adventures alike.

Warren Lapworth

Making a stand for green issues

# PGA TOUR GOLF

ELECTRONIC ARTS

**A**s the synthetic TV presenter Max Headroom (where is he now?) might say, "So you play golf?" If the idea of seeing hole checked courses and making around in wet weather has always put you off playing the real thing, let *PGA Tour Golf* take you on a few rounds from the isolated comfort of home.

The game is run from the *Pro Shop* which has five pop-up menus: Play, File, View, Stats and Options. The first Play option is Practice Hound which lets you battle any of the game's four courses. The number of players competing, whether they're human or computer controlled, new or continuing with data previously saved to disk, whether they're starting from Middlebrook or Anaheim Hills, and which 14 clubs (out of 17) they'll be using, have to be defined. This is also the route for an actual Tournament. Practice options on the Play menu let you try out the driving range or a putting green.

The File menu saves and loads games and stores player data from disk, and View gives your scorecard, the leaderboard and tournament results. Stats gives information on driving accuracy, average score, longest drives, earnings and so on of current and saved players and lists leading scores and money winners of the tour.

Selections on the Options menu toggle whether special features are automatically used in the game. CreditCard gives an aerial view of the course and the path taken by the ball after each shot. Is text overlaid with a small graphic. Ball Lie shows the surface the ball's on after every shot and Greens overlays a contour grid when you reach one. Fly-by-hole Preview shows a 3-D tracking shot of the hole, around the flag then back to the tee, and is accompanied by text advice from a PGA member. Music and effects are off are the last parts of the customizable configuration.

At the tee, shots are aimed with a crosshair, leaving in mind wind speed and direction indicated by a small arrow to the

left of the screen. On the right, an information box gives hole number, par, stroke number, distance from hole and data in use. A shot is played by pressing the three keys. The first press puts a power bar in motion, growing from the accuracy point. The second sets the power and releases



the ball's direction, and the third press stops it. If the bar is stopped before it reaches the accuracy point the ball will hook to the left, if it's stopped beyond that point the ball slices to the right. Shot accuracy is also affected if power is set above 100%.

If you play a bad shot while practicing, you can "take a Mulligan" (replay a shot without penalty), but in a tournament the best you can settle for is dropping a shot. If you're doing badly you can give up and go on to the next hole but it'll count as 12 shots on your round. A good shot's automatically action replayed in slow motion, the ball's motion through the air plotted, but you can choose to see any shot again.

After a nice clean opening shot, further ones are complicated by the lie of the ball, in rough, sand and so on. Choice of club helps but there's also parlay and stop shots to help you get out of tricky situations.

The basis of the game — the sleekpoint and control system — is the same as the majority of golf games; other than a single

GAME PGA TOUR GOLF  
PRODUCER ELECTRONIC ARTS

VERSIONS

AMIGA

£24.99

PC

£24.99

PC

84

After the pleasantly drawn *Pro Shop* and *PGA* test, the first thing you see in a tournament is the impressive 3-D flyby, showing the contours of the hole. It doesn't work well on a slow machine but the way the flyby window increases in size as it tracks back to the tee, ready for the full-screen scenery and golfer sports of the game itself, is impressive. Your golfer is a tough blocky but animated ball and ball movements fairly realistic. Music and effects are basic but Roland, Adlib and OMS boards are supported.

bar rather than a split one, the computer/mouse raster is the same as the classic Leadboard. However, *PGA Tour Golf* is unique in its wide variety of options.

The fly-by, backed up with the usual map, is a great way to familiarise yourself with the trees, bunkers, water and fairways of the hole, and tips from the American pros are a boon. The contour grid of the green is a concise and accurate way of showing the slope, but as it makes putting easier, unexcuses is extreme on some greens.

The action replay is purely cosmetic but is fun to use, while chips, punches, drop shots and so on increase realism of play. Wind is also true to life, rather than the constant strength and direction of other games, and is constantly changing in *PGA* and is prone to downward bursts in unexpected directions.

For a polished, realistic and playable game of golf with all the trimmings, *PGA Tour Golf* is the one to go a round with.

Wesley Lapworth



100



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# GAUNTLET

## THE THIRD ENCOUNTER

ATARI

GAME GAUNTLET: THE  
THIRD ENCOUNTER  
PRODUCER ATARI  
VERSIONS  
LYNX £34.95

LYNX

82

Is there so, and to your grief? Dozens of princesses rescued, hundreds of treasure chests looted and still you want more. The Star Wars is the latest item to appeal to your kleptomaniac, and it has the unfortunate tendency of breeding hordes of violent creatures.

After a fast opening sequence, there's a character selection screen: choose from a female Barbarian, Sorcerer, Tab-like

- 1) Race around the maze-like castle picking up useful objects.
  - 2) Find keys to unlock gates.
  - 3) Collect all the gold you can.
  - 4) Beat the boss when ready.
- On the negative side is only this: everything is out to kill you! Even the plants, which eat you up and spit you out — a great animated effect. There's also ghosts, which must be



Android, Samurai and Pink Rocket! Each has their own statistics, stamina, speed, etc, and there's a useful option to start on a higher level, any multiple of five up to 50. Exactly halfway through the 40-level game.

The game is played with the Lynx held vertically. Beneath the scrolling playfield there's a status/inventory window. Radar is displayed most of the time. Moving towards something, like a big red apple, is mirrored here, gradually increasing in size (that hardware perspective scaling is hot stuff). On the right are life points, speed, strength and missile intensity (no matter the weapon, its discharge is called a missile).

How reassuring there's nothing dangerous around, pressing B brings up the inventory. Scrolling through with the joystick let's you select an item and then use, or discard it. A clipboard of that item can be found directly to the left of what was the radar box.

For those who haven't played Gauntlet before, the rules are simple:

shoot from a distance, and speedy spiders — use the console to trip them.

So look out for all those potions and items, some hidden behind apparently solid walls, and remember, just picking up an item doesn't activate it — you have to use it in the inventory window. You can't hold an infinite amount of stuff, and most of the magical effects vanish when you exit a level. One of the best items is a the Farside scroll, allowing you to view the entire level without hindrance. Just remember, your body is a sitting duck while this is going on. There's also a Revive scroll — use it just before you die or, in multi-player games, to revive another player. Of course there is the fact that all your companion's possessions are left when he/she departs.

And gold isn't only pretty-looking, you can use it in computer terminals scattered throughout the levels. Some offer advice (like 'be home'), while others will tell you the next stuff lying about that you can't just

Gauntlet: The Third Encounter is one great game for fantasy roleplaying fans. You get it all: fast animation, great colours, neat sound... Working the controls is easy, with the view similar to the coin-op versions found in arcades. Varying the background patterns of the maze keeps away the boredom, and colour coupled with moderately sized sprites minimises the 'eye-searing headache' factor that often plagues the older days. You do have to get used to switching between the A/B buttons, as until you get your bearings, it's best to have some gold in the inventory window. That way you can only accidentally drop the gold in a moment of heated confusion, rather than invoking a potion or scroll that used elsewhere. About the only thing left to mention is that the game comes in a smaller box, with the cartridge itself now having a 'hook' which makes it easier to remove. Not that you're likely to be taking it back out this decade.



pick up on your own.

Up to four players can go monster-bashing, but of course each Lynx has to have its own Gauntlet cart. Also, there are no code words or battery back-up. Buy the item or turn off the Lynx, and the only way back to that mysterious level will be the dancing cat (it is by starting all over).

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# SHORTS

## PROPHECY II: THE VIKING CHILD

Electronic Zoo ■ Atari ST ■  
£19.99

Welcome to Odin's world. You play Brian, a child destined to become one of the greatest heroes in history. Odin's evil forces don't like the idea of a potential hero in their midst, so they kidnap your family and friends in an attempt to foil the prophecy. To guarantee your destiny you must start your odyssey.

There are 16 magical lands to negotiate before you reach and defeat the evil god, Loki (not brother to Thor as all mythology buffs will know). There are adventures aplenty, which can be defeated initially with a knife, and later on with more powerful weapons.



The gameplay bears more than a passing resemblance to *Wonder Boy*, although graphics are bland, with mediocre sprites. Treasure Map is definitely the pick of the month's Electronic Zoo releases.

MC

Machine rating: 70%

## DRAGON'S LAIR

Empire/Readysoft  
■ Atari ST ■ £44.95  
Originally reviewed: TGM118

The latest disk version of Dragon's Lair was reviewed on the ST a long while back — but how many people have got a laser disc player? The ST floppy disk version has been far less long running, and now it's finally arrived in unlikely to cause any eye-bleeds. Cartoonish graphics and impressive sound effects still don't compensate for the lack of content.

MC

Machine update: 75%

## ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE ROBOT MONSTERS

Tengen/Denmark ■ Spectrum  
■ £9.99/£14.99  
Originally reviewed: TGM331.

Jake and Duke are on the case as two rough, tough SWAT operatives who must stop the *Robot Invasion*. On the Spectrum, *Escape from the Planet of the Robot Monsters* starts with an impressive intro sequence explaining the plot of the game along with a video frame (1989). A nice touch is the arcade game's futuristic atmosphere, which what happens when you disaster take over the city. Purchase is recommended.

MC

Machine update: 81%



## SUPER GRID RUNNER

Ulamsoft ■ Amiga ■ £10.95

After the disappointing *Phobos Storm* reviewed last issue, the Yab returns to well-trodden territory. Again, the Earth is under attack. This time from the green *Slimeballs of Kihongo*. As luck would have it, a prototype of a new starfighter is ready for testing. The *Vortex Hyper X13* is on the runway and ready for action, and only you can pilot the thing.

Your ship is based within the lower half of the screen, with alien scout flying down from all angles. However, even with 64 levels — the first 32 are directly accessible from the main screen — the game is just a simple *Conquest* game. There's in-

## SKI OR DIE

Electronic Arts ■ C64 ■  
£9.99/£14.99  
Originally reviewed: TGM231.

You'd have thought that after the problems encountered getting a PC version in look as good as *Ski or Die*, the C64 version would be a doobie. Not so. The graphics are more than disappointing, the sound fantastic, and playability non-existent.

MC

Machine update: 50%

## SIM CITY

Infogrames  
■ Atari ST ■  
£24.99

Originally reviewed: TGM231.



Ha, ha. Why should Amiga owners be the only ones who have to endure the late night heat *Sim City* has brought upon them? Now ST owners will have to lay up all all hours of the morning playing this amusing game. There are a few serious changes which make the game slightly trickier to master, but everything is identical. Can it (before it gets you) take — lol.

MC Machine update: 90%



te variation, but the usual *Sim City* presentation and amusing speed just about keep the game above water.

MC Machine ratings: 75%

## FIGHTER BOMBER

Activision ■ Amstrad ■  
£9.99/£14.99

Originally reviewed: TGM118.

All the bugs seem to be ironed out of this ear-splitting piece of software. Like the Spectrum version reviewed a couple of issues ago, the *Freelancer*, with the opening 3-D representations of the planes, is impressive and the missions are pretty tough. More of a fight sim than a shoot.

MC

Machine update: 78%

## PROJECTYLE

Electronic Arts ■ Amiga ■  
£24.99

Originally reviewed: TGM332.

Identical to the Amiga version. Graphics, sound and playability are retained in the great three-player game.

MC Machine update: 82%

## POWER DRIFT

Amtek ■ PC Engine ■  
£29.99

Originally reviewed: TGM405.

Just racing at its wildest! Low-slung off-road vehicles speed around hunching roller coaster-style tracks in a bid to attain the measured *Power Drift* trophy. There are a total of nine tracks and to reach your rally through you must finish in the top three of every race.

Graphics are highly colourful and fairly detailed. Track/scenery moves gently but high speed means you only really notice this when watching someone else play. Snatches of speech and resound effects provide suitably energetic backing to the action. Although visually it's not quite as good as *Amstrad's Amiga Connection*, playability's high — it's the best racing game currently available for the PC Engine.

WL Machine update: 87%



**KLAX****Tengen/Domark ■ Amiga ■****£19.99**

Originally reviewed: TGM030

It's disappointing that even with the impressive graphics and sounds, the Amiga version of Klax doesn't push the host machine. The action is just as frenetic as other versions with much practice needed.

**MC****Machine update: 86%****KLAX****Tengen/Domark ■ Amstrad ■****£9.99/£14.99**

Originally reviewed: TGM030

Despite the usual blocky and garish Amstrad sprites, Klax manages to be playable. Sound is a bit disappointing, a few nice tune leads to mipmap in-game effects — playability's there, though.

**MC Machine update: 84%****KLAX****Tengen/Domark ■ C64 ■****£9.99/£14.99**

Originally reviewed: TGM030

The C64 game is as playable as the other versions with solid colorful sprites and backgrounds. The winning formula can't fail.

**MC****Machine rating: 87%****ANARCHY****Pygmalion ■ Atari ST ■****£19.99**

I shan't waste space trying to make a boring plot sound interesting. Anarchy is a standard Defender clone without doubt. All the rogues are there: pesky birds, naking your computers from the bottom of the screen and flying upwards etc. etc. In fact, the 16-bit could do with a decent game of this genre. Trouble is, the game may look and sound like Defender, but it sure doesn't play like it. Ship movement is slow and unresponsive, firing even more so. You'd be better to hunt out the original arcade machine and buy that.

**MC****Machine rating: 50%**

fames at any times — that are occupied by large, dangerous monsters.

All graphics are few columns, backgrounds and platforms repetitive, sprites are poorly animated. Music's out-fashioned, as are effects, but the screen as Voland's incinerated is good.

Just as well because it's a sound you hear very often. Stay too long on the same platform, it bursts into flames, death. Jump onto the wrong platform, it bursts into flames, death. Mistake a jump, land on a slipping spider mine. You die a lot in this game — which wouldn't be too disastrous but both graphics and sound are highly dated. Gameplay is second platform which really says it all.

**WL****Machine rating: 30%****WHIP RUSH****Sega ■ Mega Drive ■****£24.95**

Well, I've seen so many Japanese shoot-'em-ups I'm not even going to make up a plot for this one. Fly right, blast ships and collect weapons points. The weapon you gain can be changed by shooting the pad and the speed your ship moves at (though not scrolling speed) is adjustable as you go. Scrolling battles vertical as it starts through the game.

Four-layer parallel scrolling is smooth, backgrounds look detail and are short on detail. Some designs are good but again detail is lacking. Effects are good and there are some excellent pieces of music.

Being able to vary the ship's speed (any of eight settings) at any time is a nice idea, but in practice it should've been reserved for the title screen. It's quite easy to accidentally change speed and find yourself moving faster or slower than expected — both can be fatal. Playability a high and the wrenching scrolling direction keeps the action fresh. Best, though, are opposing ship names, including Sandwich Man, Master (Buster not a misprint), Unscorable and Muser.

**WL Machine rating: 79%****LAST NINJA 2****System 3 ■ Amiga ■ £24.99**

Originally reviewed: TGM014

As with the 8-bit version, both of the 16-bit games are busy to control. Sure, the background graphics are great on the Amiga (they should be), but the game is dull, and there are plenty more complex 16-bit games out there. Good, but not that good.

**MC****Machine update: 70%****LAST NINJA 2****System 3 ■ Atari ST ■****£24.99**

Originally reviewed: TGM014

An annoying time-lapse of the ST version, but can thankfully be turned off. The gameplay is identical to the Amiga, complete with slow sprites which distract from the enjoyment. The presentation was amazing on the 8-bit, but 16-bit screens come to expect the best of quality — and demand more depth than this old game can give.

**MC****Machine update: 70%****WILD LIFE****New Deal ■ Amiga ■ £19.95**

I don't think I've seen such a looking-glass game since Demarc placed *P-Tape*. What life looks like. In *Magician's Safari Game* to be true.

As a wildlife reporter you are given an assignment to photograph animals in four parts of the world. In each of the Arctic, Australia, India and Canada you must take three shots of three animals. And that's the only difference from *Safari Game* — different scenery.

Also like *Safari Game*, *Wild Life* is very playable in the short term, but after a while boredom sets in. Unlike *Safari Game* you don't even get the chance to win the photo race.

**MC Machine rating: 55%****WILD LIFE****New Deal ■ Atari ST ■ £19.95**

2nd Amiga review

Graphically identical to the Amiga game, ST *Wild Life* quickly becomes tedious when you realise all you have to do is press the shutter and shoot a few bad guys. Even when you are shot, first aid is applied regularly. The toughest part of the game is identifying some of the more exotic creatures to be shot. I fear this may be a game for inebriated reporters.

**MC Machine rating: 56%****EMLYN HUGHES INTERNATIONAL SOCCER****AudioLogic ■ Amiga ■ £24.99**

Originally reviewed: TGM017

It's taken ages for the 16-bit versions to appear, and there's too late. With Kick Off 2 out, they'd have to be something pretty special to make any impression, and they're not. Even so, the game's quite playable and offers some much customer, but the actual match is average in comparison — unless the sound effects which are rather good. As a change to Kick Off, it's probably quite attractive — but why buy second best?

**MC****Machine update: 79%****YOLANDA****Millennium ■ Atari ST ■****£19.99**

Great goddess Here is so jealous of beautiful Yolanda that she's cast a spell on her: any man who falls in love with her will die. To lift the curse, Yolanda has to perform 10 tasks, each of which involves an array of platforms — all liable to burst into

# INTERNATIONAL 3D TENNIS

INTERNATIONAL 3D TENNIS IS A REVOLUTIONARY NEW TENNIS SIMULATION. THE INNOVATIVE USE OF VECTOR GRAPHICS HAS CREATED A GAME WITH UNRIVALLED PLAYABILITY AND AN UNPARALLELED NUMBER OF FEATURES.



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- Digitized view of real Wimbledon empty (ST and Amiga).

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PALACE

**BLUE BLINK****MMK Work ■ PC Engine ■**  
**\$39.95**

Something with such a banal title as this, especially when the plot (Blink is a magical flying blue cowboy himself), just had to be an engine game, you actually control a shoot-out in green clothing who, with two gangster-type characters remaining alive evenly means just a few pixels taller later, is making his way to Queens Castle for some reason, the last of five "worlds." He and his companions must deal (of course) throwing stars at tortoises, armadillos and grizzlies, which also finally items. The leader of the trio can be changed so that after weapons come into use. In the first three situations, where gangsters and leader would die. Blue

Blink battles by and motioned health.

Options are small, easy, detailed and well-animated. Either there's a female member of the mob or one of the gangsters is a transgender. Backgrounds are pleasant and scroll smoothly, but there's not much detail in them. Tunes are suitably cheery and loose, effects standard Engine ones.

The addition of two characters following the one under your control isn't completely new but it's very handy used. However, it doesn't really change the game, just triples your firepower and makes jumping movements look interesting. Otherwise, Blue Blink is ordinary console platform, are requiring a hell of a lot of wandering around between worlds.

**WL****Machine rating: 66%.****GREG NORMAN'S  
ULTIMATE GOLF****Genie Graphics ■ Atari ST ■**  
**\$34.95**

The "White Shark" has put his name to this product, the first to give a full view of the contents of each hole, using an overlaid 3-D grid. Many factors affect a shot, the

angle of the club head to the ball, angle of swing, wind, lie of the ball and, of course, strength. The latter is controlled by the usual quickly growing and shrinking bar graph, also determining hook and slice.

The grid landscape is unusual and interesting to look at but it also hides upon it lack of detail. The Greg sprite is vaguely drawn and poorly animated but the smaller option graphics are pleasant and the ball moves

fairly realistically. Sounds are few but the whack of club against ball is highly effective.

*Ultimate Golf* tries to expand upon the long-standing Leaderboard rig-up with its big landscape and adjustable swing and drive angle but in no major improvement. The grid looks weird but doesn't help much and adjustable factors make inaccurate and usually unnecessary changes to strokes. The caddy takes a very long time to choose which club you should use, an irritating interruption to a game game.

**WL Machine rating: 73%.****GREG NORMAN'S  
ULTIMATE GOLF****Genie Graphics ■ Amiga ■**  
**\$34.95***See Atari ST review*

A shorter screen gives a Cinemascope effect but although quickly shown, the landscape's lie from perspective. Ball movement is (by) instinctively shrinking in apparent size and sometimes taking a stupidly and irritatingly long time to settle. The nice thrack of a shot in the ST version has been replaced by the sound of a schoolmaster's cane being walked through the air.

**WL Machine rating: 72%.****THUNDER FORCE III****Techne Soft ■ Mega**  
**Drive/Genesis ■ \$34.95**

Just as the Engine's baseball game, *Power League*, is reaching its third version, so the 16-bit Mega's blast has a second sequel. In your multi-weapon Thunder Force ship, you have six worlds to shoot the hell out of, each governed by a particularly large creature and all but one of them selectable from a stamp.

The joystick's three buttons fire a weapon (major surprise), change weapon and increase ship speed. Which button does what is changeable from an options screen. Flying rightward, some of the attacking ships and monsters leave behind coils to give its player but a few) slow, lock shot, sever, larger and bigger weapons.

Parallel scrolling is silky smooth and, at certain times, very fast. Weapons are a dazzling display of synchrotronics, and imaginatively designed and well-shaded sprites attack in great numbers. Large adventures, ones in mid-air not just the end, are impressive and the live reveal, with swirling background and bursts of flame, is amazing. Sound effects are many and arcade-like, but orientate-accented speech is a bit stunted. Music's fast-paced and suits the action.

*Thunder Force III* is one of the most professional, arcade-like arcade games I've ever seen. It has all the challenge and difficulty that exists there are in our play, and looks of cinematic. Nine types of weapon make various assault tactics to be used and selectable levels mean you won't get bored of seeing the same old things. The best shoot-em-up on the Mega Drive.

**WL Machine rating: 85%.****ANTAGO****Art of Dreams ■ Atari ST ■**  
**\$19.95**

Remember Connect 4, the game where you had to drop colored counters into a board and line up four of them in a row, a bit like thoughts and Grosse but with graphics? Remember the stupid 886 Game about that maze it all seem very similar and dramatic? Well, Antago's pretty similar except the counters are pushed on from the sides of a five by five grid, shifting along as counters in its way, and you, as a little devil, must connect five. Your counters are actually spiked balls while your opponent, an angel controlled by the computer at one of several skill levels or another person, has cloaks.

The boards (there are three designs) are effectively shaded and the counters are good, too. The devil sprite's brilliantly devils looking but the angel's just too cute. Both are poorly animated and effects are not drawing sleep.

Do you really want to waste valuable games-playing cash on something as limited as a push version of Connect 4 (well, five)? The computer is a challenging opponent but there's so little to the game, you won't care about beating it at high levels. Playing against a friend is more amusing but Connect 4's a lot cheaper.

**WL****Machine rating: 40%.****ANTAGO****Art of Dreams ■ Amiga ■**  
**\$19.95***See Atari ST review*

Graphically, as near to the ST as makes no difference (you still want to push that angel's face two in) but there's a fairly fine line using Art of Holes sounds. The few effects/sounds are subtly fun.

**WL****Machine rating: 42%.**

# DAMOCLES MERCE- HARY II

Neosagen ■

Amiga ■ £24.99

Originally reviewed: TGM202

The comet Damocles is due to hit the planet Eris in a few hours, and it's just as hard to stop it as the Amiga. The scrolling and sprites are fast and smooth, guaranteeing more sleepless nights.

MC Machine update: 92%

# RICK DANGEROUS

Firebird ■ Atari ST ■ £19.99

Originally reviewed: TGM202

Strange that this game's taken so long to reach the ST. A considerable additional option allows you to start on any of the first four levels, although this is no way makes the game any easier. Buy this without hesitation. Good news, too, is that there's another Rick adventure in production.

MC Machine update: 90%

# ASTATE

New Deal Productions

Amiga ■ £19.99

Originally reviewed: TGM202

Produced some sort of jiffy to before the game begins, with the same flat backgrounds and crudely drawn and animated sprites of the ST original. Music is gratingly discordant but the plot, still one of your architect's bit have reasonable rewards and a pleasant female voice announces the beginning and end of each game. Still, a flawless wonder around a few countryside scenes.

WL Machine update: 53%



# BLOOD MONEY

Pygnosis ■

Amiga ■

£9.99/£14.99

Originally reviewed: TGM2018

I'm amazed that Pygnosis have done such a good job. I never thought the Amiga version could be translated to the ST, never mind the poor C64. Graphically and musically Blood is to remember about. There's a pleasant title tune and accurate sound to 'Buy, Buy, Buy!'

MC Machine update: 90%

TGM  
STAR  
PLAYER

TGM  
STAR  
PLAYER

# SKIDZ

Granlin Graphics ■ Amiga ■

£19.99

You're a real red state dude. You've got the shoes, the stubble, the whips, and your favourite video game is freestyle half-pipe on Lyric California Games. And you're really concerned about the amount of litter in your town. It's maybe you're not so cool after all. But anyway, an idle or skateboard you must collect litter and deposit it in bins within a time limit, whilst avoiding hazards and completing various tasks. Your equipment and health can be restored at a shop and ultimately you'll face the challenge of The Race.

Between each level, graphics are fairly repetitive and averagely detailed. Sprites fit in to be cartoony but in the end are vague and unexciting, particularly cars and dogs, which look like sacks being blown along. Scrolling's smooth, animation isn't, and jolly music has some real noisy samples.

Clear reminds me of Skate Crazy, an 8-bit Granlin product of mid-88, where the



player negotiated a series of obstacle courses on roller skates. In the possibly second litter had to be collected under a time limit, so it seems a bit odd that Granlin have resurrected it now on 16-bit. Thankfully the result isn't as bad as it sounds. There are two control systems which is just as well because the default one is tedious, with the second one clearly a fairly enjoyable if only for a limited time.

WL Machine rating: 72%

# ITALY SOCCER '90

Sirmamondo ■ PC ■ £19.99

Another football game, yet again based upon the 1990 World Cup. At least Sirmamondo are an Italian software house, which can't be bad considering it's the host nation. Sirmamondo have copied into their (cracked) crystal ball, and found only eight competing teams. Matches are between six and ten minutes long and are viewed as if watching from the stands.

Amiga C64: This is the first PC game in a long time that doesn't offer at least VGA graphics. The pitch is cyan with shaded purple stripes and the goal are a scatter of identical black faces. Sprites are very small (although this looks comparatively huge) and badly animated — they look like they're doing the cartoon. Effects are few and are the usual PC stereotypes.

It's difficult to know what to say here. The pathetic graphics are overwhelmingly off-putting, and when you force yourself to

play it's just as slow and dull as expected. Italy Soccer '90 is an old-fashioned in its gameplay as it is in its graphics. Avoid at all costs.

WL

Machine rating: 8%

# ITALY SOCCER '90

Sirmamondo ■ C64 ■

£9.99/£14.99

See PC review

There are 16 teams to choose from in this version and you can choose their shirt colour. The pitch is plain green with this markings and goals very clearly, selecting every couple of seconds. Sprites, like more than stock men, are hunched over, swing their arms as they go and swirl along at a yawn-inducing rate. Effects are few and simple. Probably the most laid-back football game on the C64.

WL

Machine rating: 10%

# BARUMBA

Narnost ■ PC Engine ■

£29.99

Those mad professors just don't give up. If they're not mixing new chemical concoctions to turn people into homicidal maniacs or making bizarre machines, they're creating new lifeforms by stitching bits of old ones together. One's making a substance of himself in Barumba, so in your strange optional flying machine you head for his castle fortress. The prof's minions attack you but your machine's armed with two cannons that can be rotated clockwise (right) once or anti-clockwise (left) button.

Graphics are fairly simplistic, sprites short on colour, detail and animation frames, and backgrounds are little better. Scrolling is smooth in all directions, though a yet more average Japanese console fare and effects are ordinary.

Although graphics, sound and levels

are that of a very plain, mediocre shoot-'em-up, the spectacular addition of rotating guns, to just more well and variable into aiming, increases playability enormously. The game scrolls in at eight main compass directions within each level, and in the tracking stick moves as their approach slight changes and a scrolling direction shifts to take you around a new section of the level. It's awkward having to use the fire button to rotate anticlockwise and this is Barumba's only real fault.

WL Machine rating: 77%



## DE BALL

Mudson Soft ■ PC Engine ■  
\$29.99

Why should two pre-pubescent Japanese girls push past glass bats around while being pursued by vicious wild creatures? Your guess is as good as mine, but it's the goal in this product of a warped mind. The girls (or girl — there's a single player option) push or pull red, blue, green and black balls around each single-screen level and position them on the appropriately colored bases. The balls can be kicked to temporarily put the tortoises, gorillas, hedgehogs and so on out of action. Included is a mini football game. Kick Ball, where a single-screen pitch is lined with reflecting walls and the ball's semi-controlled path usually results in lucky rather than skillfully played goals. There's also a maze editor, to create your own levels, but without the ability to save it's not really worth the effort.

Sprites are large and of the traditional cute Japanese nature. Creatures are pretty ordinary but the girls are exceptionally defined and animated. The balls themselves are very light and realistically shaded. Music's electronic oriental and light effects are functional.

De Ball is an unusual game design but then what do you expect from the Japanese? It's very simple, too, just move objects to certain places. Switches and facing balls (which can only be moved when fully coloured) complicate further levels but the main hindrance are other balls. Regardless, purists mean one-player games become too difficult and although two-player games can be fun, De Ball is too straightforward for its own good.

WL

Machine rating: 71%



## BASKET MANAGER

Simsulacra ■ Amiga ■  
\$19.99

Yeah, basket, go for it, you can hold that scrap of waste paper and the coin! Ahem. You're actually a basketball team manager and have a few million dollars to spend on buying eight players, either professionals or rookies, but price is very expensive. Matches are shown from above on a scoring court and passes can be made straight ahead or blocked with use of a swinging arm.

Player graphics are pretty similar to each other, all equally scruffy drawn. The pitch is neatly done and scrolls well.



## THE PLAGUE

The Software  
Business/Innecprice  
Software ■ Amiga ■ \$24.95

You're a busy guy with a broken fetish on a remote planet where a plague has mutated people into grotesque creatures. Therefore there's only one thing you can do: rush around and blow the freaks to pieces. It's not quite that simple because bio-fused mutant creatures, fire and bubbling poisonous liquids can also reduce your energy.

Background graphics are white screen, no-funeral, a little short on detail but smooth's scolding. The larger sprites are equally bright but empty, unrelentingly

shaded and animated. Sound effects are old-fashioned but the music's pleasantly moody and although selectable in-game music uses decidedly C&A sounds, it's a great piece.

The graphics are a lot of the problem with The Plague, obstacles so big that an instant after they appear they're right next to the player sprite — you have to be the quantity whether you can see opponents or not, to stay alive. Early platform jumps require instant skill and three continue plays take you right back to the beginning of the level, almost useless. Repetitive and awkward sections only serve to put you off playing again.

WL Machine rating: 60%

## PSYCHO CHASER

Naxosoft ■ PC Engine ■  
\$29.99

The main character, presumably the Psycho Chaser, is a big, robust robot of the future, dedicated to truth, justice and the American way of blowing the hell out of bad guys first and asking questions later. He has robots at his disposal, multi-way, blaster and thunder weapons (enhanced with pick-ups) to destroy the various rogue robots he encounters.

The Chaser is an excellent sprite, metallic and mechanical, but his animation, although good, is too slow for the speed at which he moves around the landscape. Other sprites are less well designed and backdrops are composed of frequently repeated blocks. Effects are lively but music's hardly noticeable.

The character you control is on foot yet Psycho Chaser plays just like any vehicle.

ly swirling speeding shoot-em-up. Being able to move freely between two weapons is nice but, other than the occasional use of 'thunder', you'll find few the only one worthwhile. Chasing games are commonplace on the Engine so you needn't worry about this one.

WL

Machine rating: 63%



## CHASE HQ

Tails ■ PC Engine ■ \$29.99  
Originally reviewed: TGM25

Immediately loses the appeal of the coin-op because Nancy's speech is in Japanese! In-game speech is missing, replaced with good effects but clearly mums. Sprites are flat and blocky, backgrounds no better with pathetic colour graduation in the sky. However, it moves smoothly and quickly and gives a good illusion of movement. There are continue plays but even so it's difficult to catch criminals in this version.

WL

Machine updates: 78%

**DJ BOY**

Sega/Kaneko ■ Mega Drive/Genesis ■ **C34.95**

DJ Boy isn't the cool, laid-back and fashionable dude he used to be. A gang of thugs have kidnapped his girlfriend and, rather fed up about it, the Boy has dashed off in pursuit. Rhythm-steering through non-stop swirling levels, he punches evil-looking various reality types who leave behind clouds. Each level ends either with a missed challenge or a particularly large bang. To make things easier, DJ Boy can spend coins at a shop to obtain energy,

extra speed, increased punch strength and so on.

Scenes are fun, bright and colour-rich, but animation's jerky. Scoring's smooth, music's fun but effects are repetitive and fairly simple.

Like the game, really. Dodge, kick, punch, reflect, game over, game. You have four units of energy but only one life and no continue plays so it'll be a long time before you get past the first major adversary, the big mama — although it's likely that you'll give up first and play something more amusing and worthwhile.

**WL Machine rating: 67%**

## ADIDAS CHAMPIONSHIP FOOTBALL

Ocean ■ **C64** ■ **E9.99/C14.99**

Ocean are sensible. They weren't going to call things from the normal list containing Italy, 1990, Italia, World Cup, '90 and Soccer and juggle them around to name their sports game. Hence, they got the license to a famous sporting goods manufacturer. But still, you choose your team from the 24 qualifiers for the year's World Cup then all the teams are divided into six groups. Check on the fixtures, choose match direction, choose formation and begin the fast match. The pitch is shown in plan view and the ball is free-running — it doesn't stick to the goal so you must aim it along.

The fancy bit of the sequence is good but it all goes downhill from there. The options screen is adequate but the gamey controls. A fairly realistic panel occupies the bottom quarter of the screen yet the crudely shaded pitch scrolls slowly, with slight judder, and there's a glitch when it meets the panel. Sprites are blocky, malformatted and aesthetically unimpaired. Effects are just white noise but music's well composed with quality sounds.

I think Ocean must've spent all their money on forming Adidas because the game itself is very much indeed. Options are few, graphics are appalling, yet it's loaded in four carts. Not so hot on disk but horrendous on cassette, a long wait before you reach a highly disappointing match.

**WL**

**Machine rating: 34%**

**ARMED F**

Big Dan ■ **PC Engine** ■ **E29.99**

Armed F? Sounds like an Indian movie (it is, but it's actually the attack formation of the forces in the game, where facing invisible odds). Well you are actually, because despite implications to the contrary, it's a one-player game. The formation bit applies when you collect pods to give two side guns. They can be positioned to

the side and front or back of the main ship when the necessary 'F' formation pods have been collected.

Graphics are fairly simplistic, lacking detail, shading and using few colours. Scrolling's smooth but slow, music is fashioned and repetitive, and effects crude and unhelpful.

Armed F's based on a coin-op, a fairly obscure Nichibutsu one I've never seen, if it's anything like this conversion then it must be a pretty stiff machine. Crude old graphics perfectly match the deranged gameplay sort of like a veridical Atari-era but without the fun. You lose all push-ups when you die, particularly infuriating because the game's difficulty levels're set very high. Only masochists need apply.

**WL**

**Machine rating: 26%**

**TURN IT**

Tate/Kinsoft ■ **Amiga** ■ **E19.99**

An original game in the style of *Beat Bop* and *Beatmania*, each level of *Turn It* is filled with a number of tiles, each with a design or Japanese character. Under a time limit, pairs of the tiles are clicked on to turn them onto none and left. It's not as easy as it sounds because a different design of tile cannot be between the two tiles — the first pair taken have to be from the board edge — and the pair taken can only turn twice.

Graphics are really just the tiles but at least they're neatly drawn — although the differences in colour are slight between some otherwise identical tiles so it's easy to accidentally select a non-pair. Sound is some reasonable music and a couple of clicking effects.

Turn It is a very simple idea but it's one that frequently has you scratching your head. However, this is because time limits are tight so you have to find pairs pretty quickly. Otherwise, it's just a case of looking for matching designs in a chaotic place — not the most interesting of pastimes.

**WL Machine rating: 61%**

**F-1 MANAGER**

Simulmonds ■ **Amiga** ■ **E19.99**

Prepare to qualify! But, before burning rubber, you have a budget to spend on driver, engine and pit team. You can then visit the workshop to adjust suspension, tyres and chassis aerodynamics before qualifying and racing.

Options screens are bright and clear but in-game graphics are pretty dull. The cars, viewed as usual from behind, are regularly shown in few colours and wander around a narrow, unconvincing track. Effects are few but music's decent synth-pop.

Simulmonds (they're Italian!) have decided that simple pedal-to-the-metal race gameplay is not enough, and so have thrown in a few options it is *F1 Manager One*. That's taken care of reasonably well although features are too tight but Simulmonds have forgotten about the size limit. Poor graphics and mouse control destroy any feel that maybe been generated and then gameplay's attempt-

ed when anything goes wrong, killing it off stone dead.

**WL**

**Machine rating: 40%**

**F-1 MANAGER**

Simulmonds ■ **C64** ■ **E9.99/C14.99**  
See Amiga review

Options screens are ugly, looking little glassier than are accompanied by a motiveless, grating tune. Your car, viewed as if you're sitting in the cockpit and have an extremely long neck, is malformatted and unattractive, and what can be seen of the driver's body has suffering from mild malnutrition. The track resembles unconvincingly a string but horizontal scrolling's fine in the race section itself and writes are quite good. But as you don't directly control the car in the section it's rather wasted.

**WL**

**Machine rating: 29%**



## IMPOSS

He's been on the run for sometime now. Kidnapped by aliens and transformed into the super hero of the Minotaur, Monty Male has got a seemingly impossible task ahead of him. Not so for Steven Knight from Obsolescence who's solved Impossable and sent in these hints for this month's Survival Guide.

## LEVEL 1

Point 1: The most advisable route would be to go straight down under the 1.

Point 2: After falling down, hold right on the joystick to avoid the possibility of trouble.

Point 3: From left when falling to collect the treasure.

Point 4: End of level. To kill the monster

stand on one of the middle platforms as you

can hit it 3, regardless of where it appears

otherwise.

## LEVEL 2

Point 1: Jump up into the first dragonfly from up again. Catch the food and the later weapon but watch out for the number ahead.

Point 2: Fall down towards the right.

Point 3: End of level. To kill the dragon climb up the ladder and stand on the platform. Now fire at it. You'll find the dragon a lot easier to kill if you've collected

all the weapons, particularly if you've got the

best seeking laser. When you've killed it,

pick up the bonuses quickly as they all

soon fall offscreen.

## LEVEL 3

Point 1: The bottom level is the easier of two but the top route contains a good

weapon and various other goodies.

Point 2: A reverse of point 1. The top route

is the easier of the two.

Point 3: You've got three options here. The

bottom route is probably the easiest.

Point 4: Pick up the bombs on the right if

you have the weapons.

Point 5: End of level. To kill the boss stand

in the middle of the ditch and shoot at the

four faces.

## LEVEL 4

Point 1: Take the top route.

Point 2: Go up and collect the food (you'll

need it).

Point 3: End of level. To kill the ice cream

stand on one of the dodges and shoot it.

## LEVEL 5

Probably one of the easiest levels, there are

no alternative routes.

Point 1: End of level. The whitebirds are the

only difficult end of level enemies in the

game. There's no just for way of killing them. Just shoot like mad and hope for the best.

## Explanation of objects

In general each mode may find the position of goodies scattered around the level and a bit confusing. If you just follow this guide for a full explanation of objects and their uses.

Bombs with a weapon. These need to be

used quickly, this normally takes three hits.

Umbrella. Collect these.

Platforms. No Monty game would be

complete without its fair share of platforms.

Tree branches. Not just like platforms.

Climbing tree trunks. Climb up these to

reach otherwise inaccessible parts of the

game.

Bombs. Probably the worst weapon for

Monty to equip himself with.

Laser. Always collect these for increased

weapon.

Snakes. These snakes stretch out their

arms to try and kill you. They can usually be

found at the top of a ladder.

Gold backpacks. Collect these for extra

points.

Water. Monty's not keen on this so try to

avoid it.

Birds. There are numerous enemies in

the game, too many to put on a map. This

symbol marks the position of an enemy that

can be easily shot.



## SAMOLE



**Bird.** They fly in the direction of the arrow next to them. Generally they're more annoying than dangerous.

**Lightning cloud.** Cannot be killed. When they get close to you they turn black and start firing lightning bolts.

**Recharge power-up.** Increases the effectiveness of your weapons. A maximum of three can be collected.

**Golden pods.** Colored trees and spread over the occasional shops that drop up.

**Ice cups.** Used your energy when collected.

**Converging ball.** The direction of the arrow shows which way Monty will be moved when he stands on one.

**Disappearing platforms.** These platforms can only be stood upon for a short amount of time.

**Warm rain.** Collect these. The number of words used in your presentation are displayed at the bottom of the screen.

**Green cauliflower.** Collectable.

**Reveal root or branch.** Use your energy.

**Revealing trees.** These hide you around but can be used with a few shots.

**Grapes.** Reveal your energy when collected.

**Moving tree.** These look like ordinary trees but they suddenly can't be moved when you get near into. Don't panic! If they jump over a nearby platform or jump over them.

**Falling rock.** There is a slight colour difference between these and ordinary rocks. Walk slowly towards one and when it

begins to fall, turn around and hurry back the way you came. Once the rock has crashed to the floor proceed as normal.

**Crawler.** A threat to the previous Monty games. Good thing is at that is needed to avoid being squashed by one of those.

**Food.** Replenishes your energy.

**Flying antennae.** Approach one of these slowly. Otherwise it will wake up and start to throw troops at you.

**Moving platform.** These can be avoided by a carefully timed jump.

**Claws.** Just move up and down. They can't be killed but they can be easily avoided.

**Moving chairlift.** These appear on level four and can be used to cross stretches of water.

**Bubbles.** Don't touch these, they sap your energy.

**Polar bears.** It takes a large number of shots to kill these.

**Ice.** Affect your movement slightly. Move slowly over ice patches to avoid sliding.

**Whirls.** Can be used as platforms but watch out for the water sports.

**Ice blocks.** You start to slip and slide as soon as you land on one of these. Jump off straight away.

**Birdies on bikes.** Get away from these as quickly as possible. You can kill them but you'll find that by the time you've managed to get rid of one you'll have another one on your tail.

**Falling pods.** Can be avoided in the same way as the falling rocks.

**Treasure.** Colored for extra points.

**Spells.** Collect for extra points.

**Antennae.** Not a lot you can do about these. They move across the screen so that what you just have to hope you're not in their line of fire.

**Major escape.** Carry you away from danger.

**Genie.** When he rises from the lamp, get out of the way as quickly as possible.

**Sometimes he doesn't appear into the lamp changes all you. Just jump over it to avoid its attack.**

**Plan trees.** Acts as platforms.

**Cartoon.** Can't be killed but can usually be avoided by moving around on nearby platforms.

**Drooping birds.** Drop energy-sapping birds on you. Difficult to kill.

**Falling barrel.** These can be avoided with a carefully timed jump.

**Barrels.** Acts as platforms.

**Swinging space ship.** Similar to the lightning clouds except they're better shots.

**Space shuttle.** Use in some stretches of water and acts as a platform.

**Antennae.** Appear on level three. Sap your energy. Can be avoided with a well timed jump.

**Gun barrel.** Fires bullets at you. These can easily be avoided.

# TGM TRICKS & CHEATS

**T**GM readers are up to their usual tricks and cheats with a brand new batch of tips, including guides to *Typhoon Thompson*, *Master Karateka* and *Prophecy II: The Viking Child*. *Robin Candy* sorts through your letters (but he's really looking for that elusive late birthday card).

## Ninja Massacre

**Spectrum**

Also from Aft in London, here's the codes. **S**: SWORD, **T**: TAIL, **R**: RACK, **B**: BLUE, **S**: STAG, **H**: HALL, **B**: BEER, **A**: BARD.



## Castle Master



### Atari ST, Amiga

If you're still stuck on *Castle Master* (despite last month's survival guide), Les Gibberson and his dad from Warton have some extra hints. Surely you can polish off this game now.

### The Potions

**Potion** (in the Pottery)  
After drinking this potion you will be able to travel through stone by firing a rock at them. **Strength** (in the Inn)  
Drink this to increase your strength. **Rejuvenation** (in the Dispary)

onto the ledge. Crawl around the ledge until you reach one of the supports holding the ruggel. Now crawl slightly forwards, you should now be able to get up onto the support. Crawl towards the ruggel and you should be able to see the key.

### Catacombs

At first the only way to enter the catacombs is by entering a cavern. Once inside the cavern you should kill the ghouls and collect the pendants. It's now time to visit the remaining caverns and kill all the other ghouls.

### Junk Room

To enter this room you've got to shoot the grey panel outside the door until it disappears. Now press the black square to open the door. There is a pendant on one of the shelves. To get it crawl under the shelf, stand up, turn around and walk back along the shelf. You should now be able to collect the pendant.

### Granary

Remember the grain to reveal the chest. Crawl inside it, close the lid and move forwards. You will now fall into the display chamber.

### Wizard's Hut

There is a key on top of the chair. To reach it, stand on the table.

**How to get Granary chest key**  
Stand on the drawbridge and throw a rock at the switch. The drawbridge will now catapult you onto the chapel roof.  
**How to kill the dragon**  
Shoot its eyes, horns and teeth.

### How to kill Knight in Magister's Room

Run up to it and look up. Now shoot the dark area under the helmet.

### Chamber

This increases your strength. The throne in the display chamber can only be picked up if you're at full strength.

### Useful places

#### Hospital

When you're weak go to the hospital and rest there to increase your strength.

#### Shrine

Go to the library and press the green book on the top shelf of the bookcase. A chair will appear. Sit on this and the chair will turn to face the shrine. There is a key on top of the golden ruggel. To get it, crawl to the back of the shrine and climb

## Shinobi

**Amiga**

Thanks to Aft Featherstone in Devonshire, I ran the game as usual from **main**. How type in **Levelcode** for infinite credits.



## Double Dragon

### Sega

Simon Morrison from Dagenham has a quick cheat for this game. Play it as normal until you get to mission 4 then perform 16 jumping reverse kicks and you will be rewarded with an infinite continue option.

## Operation Thunderbolt

### C64

Play the C64 version of Op Thunderbolt (named not such a disappointment) till M. Mikalits from Bolton thought it was good enough to play it to death and send in this player's guide.

### C64 cheat

Progress past level one and make sure you've got some continue plays left. When level two has loaded, start playing that about the game (P1 followed by Run-Stop). You will be asked to reveal the tape to the start of Side B. Ignore this and leave the tape playing. You should now be able to continue the game but on level three.

### Level 1

Keep your aim in the middle of the screen and then move left and right to kill the soldiers. It is advisable to hold down fire if you are a beginner for more accurate shooting. Kill the helicopters with a rocket. It shouldn't take too much practice before you can complete this level without losing a life.

### Level 2

It is important to remember that the soldiers' bullets cannot affect you if they're on the other side of the screen. Keep your aim to the far side of the screen (your side).

### Level 3

Even with lots of practice this level is practically impossible to complete without some continue plays. Tanks are more lethal purely because there are so many of them. If things get crowded, just use a rocket. You only need to use one bullet for mines and the deadly air-to-ground missiles.

### Level 4

Accurate aiming is necessary to rescue the hostages. If a hostage gets in the way shoot him. The heavily armed officer is not really that tough he comes out from the right to be prepared. Hold down the fire button and follow him around. If you are feeling

particularly vicious, shoot him in the head.

### Level 5

Basically the same as level 3.

### Level 6

The man hanging from the top air deadly as wipe them out first. If it gets too crowded use a rocket. The end-of-level officer needs to be shot in the head.

### Level 7

Another level which is basically the same as level 3 but this time there aren't any tanks.

### Level 8

This level is a real test. Make sure you keep an eye out for any grenades thrown at you, then shoot them as they move pretty quickly.

### Level 9

The hostage is to the left of the helicopter and he moves pretty quickly. Use a to the left of the hostage and let out a steady stream of bullets. Now guide your fire into the first officer and proceed you in the hostage don't get killed it's mission accomplished.

## Prophecy I: The Viking Child

Your quest to defeat Loki will be made the much easier if you use these hints sent in by Graham Oliver from Chelms. First off here are the four combinations that you will need to get through the game: Dots 010, 011, 010, 010 and 010 and 010.

### Weapons

**BOMBS** The cheapest weapons you can buy. You need to keep them in good supply for when you enter somewhere like the forest and start to fall down a great height. As you fall drop a couple of bombs to make sure that anything nasty lurking at the bottom gets its consequences. They're also handy for destroying annoying birds.

**BOLAS** A little more expensive than the bombs but nonetheless fairly useful. It normally takes three hits from a bolas to destroy most baddies.

**FRIG SHOTS** A brilliant weapon. These come in an your adventures and are best kept for use against the end-of-level guardians. It scores 1000 hits for a few sprits to dispatch any end-of-level guardian.

**STORM HATCHES** your enemies for a few seconds but is a bit expensive. It's only really useful when you initially visit the chamber of an end-of-level guardian, allowing you to get into position before letting up with the fire bolts.

**POTIONS** Very expensive but if you're rolling in cash buy one or two just in case.

### Things to buy

**GLIDE** Useful when there are a lot of vanishing platforms about.

**CLIMB** Makes you invincible for 30 seconds. Buy whenever you can.

**SPEED** Only useful when you're trying to escape from fast-moving baddies.

**HEALTH** Definitely a good buy but always check exactly how much money you need and what the price is before buying.

**EXTRA LIFE** The most important thing to buy.

**SHIELDS** A total waste of money unless you've got money to spare otherwise save up and buy a sword instead.

**SWORD** Expensive but well worth it if you can afford it buy the top of the range model. Though it doesn't actually kill enemies any quicker it's larger than Brian's dagger so there's less chance of the enemies getting close.

## Astro Marine Corps

### Amiga

We didn't like this game but Jason Tullett from Sale did and sent in this useful tip.

Wait for the selection screen to appear. Press F1 and type in any of the following codes: Nostramo, Greenway, Dagobah, Replicants, Poul, Metropolis. Each code word will transport you to a different starting position.





## Crackdown

### Atari ST

Chris Starling from Cardiff sent in these tips. Start the

game as usual and type in **SMURF** while playing the game. Now if you press F1 and F2 players one and two will be rewarded with infinite lives.

## Cobra Force

### Spectrum

A thousand thanks to Aft Taccot in London. Just redefine the keys as S, L, M, O for infinite lives.

## Master Karateka

### Game Boy

I promised these hints last month, and promptly went and told them. Luckily Philip Blaxter from Portland was good enough to send in another copy. First, though, if you're having problems figuring out all the available moves, just the

instructions are in Japanese! The following list should be of some help.

- Up: Go into running mode or up-block if in combat.
- Down: Go into fighting mode or down-mid-block.
- Right: Advancement right (depending on mode).
- Left: Advance left.
- B button: mid-kick.
- A button: mid-punch.
- B button + up: high kick.
- B button + down: low kick.
- A button + up: high punch.
- A button + down: low punch.

### Magic Items

Press start then press select to advance through all the available items. Press start then select to use the item. Shunken inflicts one high-kick worth of damage. Scroll Rapid lighting. Simply hold down desired attack key combination for continuous hit. Magic Pet: Fill up energy.

### Level 1

Select  
Power: 3 Life 4 Speed 3  
Guard 1  
Mid-kick him four times in quick succession.  
Down  
Go into fighting mode as soon as you see him. As soon as he is in range mid-kick him: knock him out and lock you

# E-Motion

Atari ST, Amiga

John Thompson from Reading writes: Load the game and type in **FRANK JAFFA** on the ST or **MOON UNIT** on the Amiga. Pressing F1 will now advance one level, while F2 will advance you ten levels.



back. Now keep mid-kicking him until he dies. Don't worry about your strength level. This will automatically be replenished when you defeat him.

### Level 2

Select  
Power: 4 Life 5 Speed 5  
Guard 1  
Four mid-kicks in rapid succession are enough to dispatch any guard. But timing kicks is now much harder.  
Deadly gate  
Advance with your right foot is almost at the right-hand post of the gate. Then mid-punch. The gate will now come crashing down. Stand up. The gate will rise slowly when the gate is level with your head, run forward without stopping.  
Guardian  
Once again, go into fighting mode as soon as you see him. When he's close mid-kick him then walk backwards, kicking every now and again. He will

block most of your kicks and try the occasional mid-kick. As soon as he dies, mid-kick him. Repeat this until he's dead (this may take a while).

### Level 3

Select  
Power: 6  
Life: 7  
Speed: 5  
Guard 1  
Mid-kick him as fast as you can.  
Guard 2  
Come as the level one guardian.  
Guard 2  
Mid-kick him as fast as you can.  
Guard 4  
At level two guardian.  
Guardian  
Fire all of your shurikens at him then walk backwards into the previous screen. That while hitting as many of the links as you can. The guardian will walk slowly into the room. Mid-punch him very quickly. You may need to use the Magic Pet to finally defeat him.

## Klax

### Amiga

From John Mac Hook in Holland. Start the game as normal on the first wind. Press **CAPS LOCK** and then **SPACE**, while pressing **SPACE**, press B to stop a ball in B to start level 100 (the last one).



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# Typhoon Thompson

Atari ST, Amiga

A great game this one, certainly one of the highlights of the lighties. If the sprites are getting you down or you haven't got a clue what's going on, then have a look at these tips from Peter Vasey from London. Get used to the hovercraft's attitude and movement. Pushing forward on the throttle coupled with thrust is best for reaching top speed while pulling back on the mouse together with thrust puts the craft in reverse and forces it into the air (handy for avoiding enemy flyers). Pulling the craft back allows you to be further away the distance (sometimes helpful, sometimes a hindrance), the best to stick is drifting around without the thrusters. It's easy to thrust into danger or accidentally dive under the water if you're not careful.

Shoot one island at a time and two ways the flyers that emerge from it. Drive the flyers as fast as you can in the water they can be definitely quick at getting back to the island. The further away they are when you hit their flyer, the better your chances of getting them all. If one flyer gets back then the sprite counter resets and you'll have to start again.

The trick is to let flyers get behind you, especially dangerous ones like the Zipper. If things get too much, then underpower and use freeze bombs from closer before.

Don't go wild with the laser. One shot is enough to destroy a flyer and any further shots tend to hit the sea sprites. Even worse is a stray shot that hits



other flyers (throwing yet more sea sprites into the water). As the sea sprites are identical in look, there's no way of knowing how which island they come and hence you can't get about stopping sprites from getting back to their islands.

Never forget how wickedly intelligent the flyers are. The zipper and zipper will home in on the player if sea sprites are in the water. Bubbles will clear out more bubbles as you draw near.

## Weapons

**Laser Cannon** Absolutely essential for everything. Scatter bombs (best used to get rid of any bubbles surrounding your target, also good for spitting up groups of flyers).

**Sprite magnets** Upon killing a flyer, there's a good few sprite magnets around, even if the sprites change they'll still hang around the magnets before they expire.

**Freeze bombs** If the Zipper, Blimpster and their friends get too close, hit the freeze bomb

to halt them. Firing at them while frozen has the same effect as a laser cannon.

## The Miscellany

**Bring us the Coppers!** A dead easy level introducing you to each of the different flyers in turn. One sprite controls each flyer so collecting the seaweed sprites, and thus the coppers, shouldn't be too difficult.

**Bring us the Salmon!** Again no major hassles but this time it's 14 sprites in total, with two flyers popping out of each island with one sprite in each at the controls. Make sure you're not caught between two all-on-control flyers and you should be okay. Kill any Zippers, Bumpers or Forcers first.

**Bring us the Salmon!** The problems continue to double with 26 sprites to be picked up, two flyers from each island with two sprites in each. No real advantage in difficulty over the Hammer level except that you've got twice as many sprites to pick out of the water. **Bring us the Pacific!** Most problems in this level come in

the form of 42 sprites. Now there are three flyers per island with two sprites in each. From now on it's best to drive them away from the islands and hit them one at a time.

**Bring us the Baby!** The ultimate challenge as all but 1000s of sprites are in the water for every one of the three flyers in each of the seven islands (200 sprites in all). There's little more about this level other than the increase in sprites. You now have to drive them even further away from their islands. Now just sit back and watch the most animated sequence.

## The Flyers

**Blimper** Normally this more than a nuisance, he just bashes you around for kicks. The only way you're going to get with this one is that he could let you into a bunker, Zipper, Blimpster, or anything else which is a little more useful. Luckily, this is a rare event if you make sure that the flyers are spread out about taking their cue.

**Blimper 4** Dangerous fellow, he flies faster than the blimpers and is difficult to get down for long range shots. He's even worse when close up, as he homes in on you with frightening accuracy. Get him at long range and you've got no problems.

**Zipper** Get two of these together and you'll have some real fun desperately trying to power in a blimpster first. Alternatively, hit him with a freeze bomb from below and he's a close range shot at best.

**Zipper** Obviously the opposite in effect to the Power. Fire from long range, and if he gets too close thrust away (never backwards), give for cover, hit the zipper freeze bombs, in fact — do anything! You have a few seconds to get away but that's all.

**Blimper** This nasty piece of work can multiply your problems at the top of a hat. Use the scatter bombs to clear the seaweed of bubbles.

**Zipper** Like the Blimpster, long range flyers are the worst of them all, the zipper being no exception. Use the long range shot facility to pick them off, if they fire, thrust back immediately together with a slip to the left or right. Bumpers fire at your last targeted position so a move away should remove you from harm's way.

**Zipper** One touch takes you both a life and a hovercraft and you must definitely need them later on. As for the low in the water you may wish from a few times. Launch a freeze bomb to stop him and fire a long range shot to finish him off. Go no account let him get near!



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# COMICS A NEW GENERATION

There are more comics on the shelves nowadays than ever before. From the old legions in *Star Trek* to a new generation in *Total Recall*. But no matter how many comics are released, you can bet you bottom dollar that our own *Mannen 'coffee and Marvel'* Lapworth will be there to check 'em out. Here's his rundown of the most interesting recent releases.

## GOD LOVES, MAN KILLS

Marvel, £3.50

A time warp for those moody mutants, the X-Men, going back to their 1982 line-up of Cyclops, Wolverine, Nightcrawler, Storm, Acolyte (now named Shadowcat) and joining Nightcrawler in *Excalibur*. Wolverine and Professor Xavier for a moment at the end. Wolverine, Man kills eggs, high profile evangelist, the Reverend William Stryker issues his crusade beyond religion and God's teachings to hit out against mutants such as the X-Men, social misfits he sees as evil. He captures Cyclops, Storm and Xavier and connects the Prof to a machine that will amplify his telepathic powers and, corrupted by brainwashing techniques, destroy mutants all over the globe.

Then, as now, Chris Claremont is fond of tales that show the oppressive he mutant minority face, a direct comparison with the racial prejudice of real life. By using social statements with fun superhero action, he avoids political overkill. Brent Anderson's good but sometimes vague art is helped considerably by Stryker Dill's helpful, considered colouring and publishes the graphically thoughtful mainstream tale.

It's becoming quite a trend to convert known *Star Trek* authors' short stories into comic strip format and gathering them into limited mini-antologies. *Orbit* is the latest, its selling point being



that each story featured was once published in *Star Trek* *Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*.

Included, each issue will lead with a story by Asimov himself, *Honoring For Nothing* opening the first *Orbit*. Diplomatic alien

life in orbit around Stone Age Earth and although most of them want to pass it by, the *Star Trek* ideas are fascinated by it and its inhabitants. What can this happen to humans possibly offer the planet? And what can the advanced sides themselves offer in return? Well the story doesn't come up with the goals, for a year off, but John Botten's art is excellent. *Alone* are a bit badly looking but the dream-like hope that everything's viewed through is highly atmospheric.

*Grimy Sweeties*: Flying Circus travels inside a van and offers facts, 'dangerous things' and some minutes of surreal misery with Grimy in her cheerleader, nurse or schoolteacher guises. Grimy and her clients live in a grim, dusty future world but it's impossible to empathise with any character and there's simply not enough story. This latter complaint can be levied at *Form and Power*, in which a doctor takes a boy in the safety of isolation as a nuclear war begins. Both stories have high quality, richly coloured art but ultimately lack feeling.

## TOTAL RECALL

DC, £1.00

Schwarzenegger's latest movie exploits are interested in the *Total Recall* comic. Arnie plays Doug Quaid, who would like to get away from it all but can't afford to move to one of Britain's off-world colonies. Instead, he goes to *Recall* to be given the memories of a secret agent's adventures. After a supposedly unsuccessful memory transfer, he's attacked by cops on the way home. This begins his mission against Cohaagen, the power-crazed administrator of the brain colony, a task aided by Hauser, a man with identical looks but different memories to Quaid.



Throughout *Total Recall* you can never be sure if it's all happening to Quaid or if it's a *Recall* memory or even just a dream. It's also possible that he didn't exist! This relaxing journey is balanced out by plenty of gratuitous violence and fast action sequences. Well I'm sure that's what they are in the movie but, although visuals are generally adequate and Arnie looks like he should, pain and interest lulls during these moments. The film is recovering critical acclaim in the States but I doubt if this adaptation is.



BUT THIS  
DOESN'T HAVE  
ANY REASON  
TO TAKE

# V FOR VENDETTA

Titan Books, £9.95

From humble British beginnings to later DC issues, Titan Books now present Alan Moore's *V for Vendetta* series in a single volume. It's 1997 and Britain is controlled by a totalitarian Labour government, an iron grip headed by the Leader and monitored by the Fate computer. But there's a strange figure in the shadows, a man called V and dressed as Guy Fawkes, a pale grinning mask his visage. On November 5th, he appropriately blows up Parliament and emerges a despairing teenager. Early from the clutches of government detectives (Fingermen). Together they continue to strike against leading state officials, who seem powerless to stop V and are consequently as to his identity.

David Lloyd's artwork is near perfect for the scenario, areas of heavy, dark ink contrasting with the pale, distraught colours of an oppressed, dehumanised world. Figures are grim and realistic, but none as striking as the towering, dark and hooded paper-mâché mask of V himself. Unfortunately, it's during a reader's encounters with him in the last part of the story (which is divided into three 'books') that *V for Vendetta* strays, later sections amusing and readable but too familiar — too 1984 — V not quite as fresh as he first appears. Still, it's impossible not to wonder who he is and exactly how far he'll go. If you didn't buy this as a monthly series it's well worth considering the collected works.



*Flintway* have finally released their long-delayed, multi-strip 'adult' comic, *Revolver*. Its lead story is *Dave*, an alternative history of America, first of the future, scripted by Grant Morrison (of *Arkham Asylum* fame). The title is used in the first nine-page, picture-heavy episode that is impossible to say where Morrison intends to take the character but the visual emphasis is a lead move. Alan Hughes's art is simple, antiquated and steadily coloured, and Dan Davis looks like a cross between Bruce Forsyth and Monty Python.

Although form is a bit vague, the visuals for *Purple Days*, by Piyel Hughes, are the best in the whole comic magazine, colour used wisely and effectively. Amiable characters begin a story based on the life of Jimi Hendrix in an intriguing if casual manner.

*Pleasure* is a complete waste of two pages that should have been used developing *Happencourse* and *Kismet*. Edited by Paul Morris, best known for his rising work with Alan Davis, the latter is set in a pub where looking good *Kismet* meets post-humous racing enthusiast *Happencourse*, where the

# REVOLVER

Flintway, £1.66

landlord accidentally discovers the deeds to the establishment. At a suitable point for this cartoon farce which failed to raise even the slightest chuckle row.

A weary young man's visit to an Indian restaurant is punctuated by Richard Kipling's surreal, hallucinogenic visit to blue-skinned Hindu. Roger (John) Brandon McCallum's visuals are detailed and effectively coloured, but I think *Pleasure* was under the influence of something when he wrote the strange yet tedious script.

Julie Hollings' *Dave* Streets is a useless attempt at sci-fi comic. *Flintway*, seven poorly written and illustrated pages, and while *Five Inches* in the title looks great, text is a stream of useless, semi-philosophical waffle. Most of the seven strips in *Revolver* go completely nowhere (like the *Barrel* in a gun...), and those which don't take any steps forward and struggle not to take any steps back, especially if it improves in time but as it stands *Revolver* is the poorest way to waste £1.66.



# STAR TREK ANNUAL

DC, £1.60

The silly series may be as old as the hills, and the actors would cede, but DC have only just produced the first *Star Trek* annual. It's co-written by George Takei, who played Sulu in the series, and presents the likeness of the residents of *Delgado*. This planet is the key supporter of a clone, yet suffers the same treatment, but unsurprisingly using technology have had an undeniable effect on the population: physical contact between *Delgado*ians causes them to spontaneously combust!

The crew of the *Enterprise* have been enlisted to help preserve the rare by gathering the necessary samples to produce late *Delgado*ians and eventually relocate them. A naive politician, *Delgado*,

objects to genetic engineering and he and his followers cause problems. Sulu has problems of his own with an old flame, who happens to be heading the medical project.

As could be expected in a story co-written by Takei (with Peter David), Sulu is the character who takes the spotlight in the annual. This makes a change from Kirk, Spock and Bones, but soon becomes tedious. He never had sufficient depth of character to justify real attention. Visually, Sulu's kidnapping by Gray Mover's simplistic, scruffy art. A story aimed at kids, and comic sentimentalists go further to shoot it in the foot. Only staunch Trekkers need beam aboard.





# THE KNIGHTS OF PENDRAGON

Marvel UK, 98p

Logically enough, Marvel UK's new mini-series, *The Knights of Pendragon*, features Captain Britain, the leader of Marvel UK's newest and, in my opinion, best mutant team. In addition, in issue one, he takes a backseat to Masters and one of the Wild Hunt - Hymenaeus Organisation (WHO), who are investigating a series of strange deaths, a white hunter has been shot with a 400-year old harpoon, a controversial that grows was found vacuum packed and installed, and more recently 80 people died after eating at a fast-food joint. A sinister sci-fi/science something appears to be at the root of the deaths and mysteriously ruthless businessmen are hindering WHO's progress.

*The Knights of Pendragon* takes a firm environmental stance, to the point of being printed on paper using half as many trees as normal paper (Y) and using minimal toxicating agents. Certainly this isn't to the publishers' disadvantage, their glossy paper holding Gary Erskine and Andy Lawrence clear, pleasant at all. Characters are reminiscent of those drawn by the great Alan Davis, who's produced the covers for the series, but not quite as friendly.

Other than a combined conversation between a father and his son, seven issues aren't forced down your throat, more eased down with thoughtful cynicism. Thus far, the emphasis is on the mysterious and supernatural but I'm sure that superhero action from Captain Britain will be brought to the fore in later issues. *The Knights of Pendragon* is a modest, intelligent way to prove the sociological conscience of the comic-reading public.



# AKIRA

Epic, £2.50 (import)

New-Tokyo, 2030, a wasteland following a thermonuclear explosion which may all prove to be the strike which triggers World War IV. Akira is named after a teenage child of incalculable power and sets a group of young friends, part of an underground resistance movement, against the forces of the tyrannical Colonel. In issue 20, *Revelations*, Kiy has a tough time getting the injured Misato to safety while Misato confers with the mysterious Lady Miyako, a trainer of psychics.

Akira, written and drawn by Katsuhiro Otomo, is a strange collection of ideas, mixing the dirty, rubble-strewn streets of a grim city devastated by war with the swirling beauty of ancient Japan. Characters fit the pattern also, the Colonel's savage rage contrasting with the serene, meditative Lady Miyako. Indeed it's the philosophical words which are the focus of this issue, fast-paced action filling in the gaps.



Art is typically Japanese, full of dramatic, disproportionate outer faces but with more detail and shading, giving colour to the future Tokyo scenery and rounds off Akira's professional production very nicely. One of the best bookshelf format series around.



# ROBOCOP 2

Marvel UK, £3.50 (import)

Detroit really is trouble now. OCP's unfair treatment of its police force has caused them to strike. The city owes OCP \$67 million and has no hope of paying. OCP have threatened to sue the city — Detroit has effectively become privatised to them. And a designer drug, nuke, threatens the city.

In *RoboCop 2*, Lewis and our cyborg friend are refusing to strike, but a raid on the nuke factory fails, and the leader of the drug, Cass, disassembles RoboCop. He put back together but with an extremely comprehensive list of directives, including don't run through puddles, don't monopolise the bathroom, and don't walk across a bathroom floor swinging your arms (don't). He clears his mind and goes up against Cass, his friends and OCP's newest cyborg cop.

Adapted from the screenplay co-written by Frank Miller, one would expect *RoboCop 2* to be something special. Although far from brilliant, it's interesting and action-packed, if unrefined. Although it is a bit weak, what *RoboCop*'s familiar visage is distorted, but



it has no scenes where graphic detail is needed. It's sure to be infinitely superior as a movie so unless you dislike surprises, leave the graphics alone until you've seen the real thing.

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# CHEAP THRILLS!

Spend your hard-earned cash on the latest blockbusting arcade-quality game and still hungry for action? Or perhaps you're crippled by mortgage rates and the poll tax, and find the folding stuff hard to come by? Warren Lapworth picks out some great games you can acquire for little cash

**B**ack at the beginning of the budget game story, the thought of a complete game for just £7.99 was an amazing concept. *Freight* and *Masterblaster*

were the only budget offerings houses then but their first games, all 8-bit (16-bit home computers didn't exist), were pretty tacky. Two quid less a lot of money for what was most use as a very short blank tape.

Gradually, the overall quality improved and both pioneering budget houses released some real gems.

As more and more 16-bit budget titles appeared, most notably *Cyber Masters*, re-releases began to appear. A lot long in the tooth, maybe, but they were and still are real games for just a few pounds. Many original games are still produced but re-releases are becoming more and more frequent, and £2.99 is fast establishing itself as the budget price.

In the 16-bit world, budget offerings had developed into quality and spectacularly. Masterblaster started well with *Blasterblast* but then things went quiet for a couple of years. *16 Blast* and *Smash 16* were launched late last year, offering games at £4.99, but none have released products of quality, the only decent 16-bit budget games are £2.99 re-releases.

## • GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS

**Releases** ■ C64/Spectrum ■ £2.99

Elite have just released 16-bit conversions of this classic. Captain's run-up but 8-bit versions have already had their second birth, *Ghost-n-Goblins*. Arthur's preferred has been kidnapped (it's a dragon's original) and you must guide him through five horizontal scrolling levels. Many gobble 'n' monsties attack him but Art has a limitless supply of fences at his disposal, replaceable by daggers, axes, fireballs, etc as he goes on his way. If damaged, Arthur loses his armour but, losing a life the next time he's hurt.

The Spectrum's graphics are detailed

## • CAPTAIN BLOOD

**Releases**

■ Amiga/Atari ST ■ £9.99



monochrome, the C64 is steady but colourful, but both have great animation and scrolling. C64 sound effects are great and music is simply brilliant, sophisticated noises used in a fun, energetic piece.

While both are top-notch, C64 *Ghosts 'n' Goblins* is especially good, one of the most playable and addictive coin-op conversions yet. Difficulty level is a little irregular, the game suddenly becoming tedious.

Machine ratings: C64 95% SPECTRUM 85%

I apologise in advance for the following surreal plot. I didn't write it.

Charles Daniels has told down-trodden programmer Goo Morlock that aliens are invading Earth through arcade machines. Goo-coded a spacewar (APW) and a night-need alien-ego (*Captain Blood*) but became trapped inside the program. Worse still, after escaping to avoid hostile aliens, his body split into 30 clones, each taking an equal fraction of his body fluid.

As the game begins, 30 of the clones have already been found — just as well considering there are 32,768 planets in the game! A gambit map is used to select worlds to hyperspace to, then you rotate through facial cameras, avoiding homing missiles on the way. To hopefully find an alien. Using more to speak, they'll hopefully give clues to the location of a clone. If you're of a suitably violent disposition, planets can be vaporised.

The graphics palette consists of blue and purple, like stars. *Captain Blood*'s ET-like art and certain parts of the ship drawing influence from *Alien*. *Edgar*, the *Alien* designer, vector graphics used in *Samurai* are gritty but the sensation of movement is good. The music, sampled from Jean-Michel Jarry and atmospheric samples are used for alien speech.

*Captain Blood* requires left panning skills to avoid the traps and outposts of the canyons and find the interludes inside warrens. Once an alien's found, communication is a question of creative and intelligent use of words to form crude sentences.

*Captain Blood*'s gameplay is a bit dated but at a mere the interstellar detective work is worth looking down.

Machine ratings: ATARI 77% AMIGA 77%



## HEAD OVER HEELS

Atari Spectrum

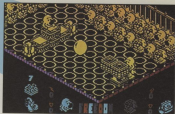
Spectrum/C64/Amstrad £3.99

Head Over Heels is one of those isometric games so characteristic of the Spectrum, the one unusual in that you control two different creatures. Head and Heels are split from the planet Pridemore and have been stranded into different cells on the evil Blacktooth Empire's prison world. The Empire holds tyrannical secrets of several planets but they can be liberated by the removal of Blacktooth's crown. Head and Heels have made it their job to steal the crown.

Head can jump high and, with the right equipment, fire deadly doughnuts, but moves slowly, while the swift Heels is bad at jumping but can carry a bag for storing items. Patroling robots endanger their lives and object-oriented puzzles and dexterity tests impede progress.

The Knight Cross style graphics are highly detailed and sprites have great character. Sprites are not C64 versions, are almost completely monochrome, but the Amstrad has some spots of colour. For such a game, speed on the standard C64 is excellent.

Head Over Heels takes a lot of getting into and plenty of mapping. After much



practice you'll be able to remember the best leaping routes, by which time you'll be well and truly hooked. Puzzles become highly obvious and it's a shame the way Head and Heels can be used both as individuals and as a team. Arcade skills, horsepower and

cartography are needed for this definitive isometric game.

## Machine ratings:

SPECTRUM 97% C64 97%

AMSTRAD 97%

## BUGGY BOY

Spectrum/Amiga/Atari ST £9.99

Taken's most famous side up is a tough race in a virtual Buggy Boy. The five selectable courses — Offroad, North, South, East and West — are each divided into five

time. Steering into flags and through gates earns bonus points.

Graphics and sound are both pretty close to the original (the ST not quite as accurate on the audio side), not easily difficult as Buggy Boy is one of the older coin-op classics. Background details in graphics are short

## LEADERBOARD

Spectrum/Amiga £9.99

Taking one of four courses, the races are shown in 3-D perspective from above and behind the gaffer's sights. Shots are taken with a cursor and played using the powertrap indicator, a split bar that sets power (jumping) and track or slope,



stages that must be completed within a tight time limit. As well as the tortuous curves of each course, hills, rocks, trees, water and more are obstacles that can cost valuable

on detail but road perspective is accurate and fast, and the buggy's action is very good.

Although there aren't any scoring extras, there's still plenty to do in Buggy Boy. Dodging obstacles and negotiating curves is enough to fill the stages, often more than enough, then there are flags and point gates to direct you from your path. Interaction with obstacles is useful, too, to make the buggy jump, a tree stump or stone to make it roll on two side wheels — useful to get through narrow gaps in walls/borders — and then the infamous football to hit for bonus points. In short, the best budget racer available.

## Machine ratings:

AMIGA 90% ATARI ST 86%

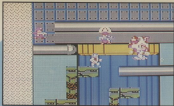
depending upon where its movement's directed.

There's not much detail in the graphics but perspective's spot on and action is rapidly drawn. The gaffer's sights, with superb animation and ball movement's realistic. Sounds are atmospheric threats and clunks.

Leaderboard came as quite a surprise when it was originally released in mid-88 for the C64: the Carvers were previously known for the mindless Contra-testing violence of Road Over Mountain and Beach Attack and it. It's just as well the brothers switched from war to sport as Leaderboard isn't a masterpiece. Tough Rivals, the boxing game which followed it, has not-  
power-high playability and is a game that the software industry would be worse without. Most, if not all, golf games that have followed it have used a close derivative of the Carvers' controlling mechanism which has been adapted for other types of game. On your own, taking your rounds by hand and better scores is an absorbing pleasure and competing against friends is even more amusing. One of the best sports games ever and a trip at this price.

## Machine ratings: 93%





## BIONIC COMMANDO

Kiwi ■ C64 ■ £3.99

Zapper, masks are not pleasant devices. If not for them, your front porch would still be independent, and not part of the enemy's territory. But you are one of the most commandos, freed with state-of-the-art weaponry, and are going back home to conquer the Enemy's bases — including demolishing the Zapper masks.

The bionic commando runs through the

multi-directional scrolling levels armed with a rifle which may be exchanged for more powerful weaponry, carried by weapons parachutes. Most important, however, is the commando's bionic arm, it extends to approximately three times the commando's height and has a strong claw on the end, which can grip many machines, allowing the commando to swing and climb with the arm. It can also be used to stop the many soldiers, guards, special vehicles and more that get in his way.

The commando's rifle is disappointing, a vague, blocky collection of pixels. However, his animation's good and the movement of the extendable bionic arm and resulting swinging motion is excellent. Other aspects are better defined but move equally well. Backgrounds are repetitive within each level but are bold, colourful and scroll smoothly. Music's superb, a little per level plus a metallic, pervasive title tune, all using high-quality sounds and brilliantly composed. Some of the best C64 music ever heard.

Ignore the hardware's 16-bit conversions (you call that scrolling?), *Bionic Commando* is one of the best run-up conversions ever to grace the Am. That's not too great a surprise considering it was done by Software Creations, who programmed the highly accurate Double Double conversion. Graphics aren't anything to write home about but it's remarkable fun to run, shoot and swing through levels — the bionic arm is easy to master yet constantly stimulating to use. Once level one's mastered and level two's end is in sight, *Bionic Commando* has you hooked, addicted even. If you want an arduous conversion for your Commodore, it's an extremely tough choice between this and *Double D* in *Double*.

**Machine rating: 9-8-6**

## FANTASY WORLD DIZZY

Code Masters ■ Spectrum ■ £3.99

Other than using the word 'imitator' as much as possible, those daring Code Masters have made a hero of a little wiggling egg called Dizzy. In this, his third game, the egg's been kidnapped by a dragon (no, I'm not accidentally re-inventing *Droopy* or *Goobler*) and is being held in a glass castle in the heart of Fantasy World. Dizzy runs and jumps through tick screens, avoiding dangerous enemies and surfaces, and collecting coins and objects.

Background graphics are bright and detailed but there's colour clash. Sprites are cute and characterful but Dizzy himself is just too nice. Audio highlight is the digitised intro speech.

In a way, I think it's a shame that Dizzy games are popular (*Fantasy World* is his third adventure, because that third egg is a raft sight). But you can't think too highly of his games. His latest arcade adventure isn't too complicated in two ways, either just collect all the gold coins you can find or use objects you find to solve puzzles. Either way you play, difficulty level is set just right as you progress that little bit further each time, ensuring you try again. Playable and enjoyable, *Fantasy World* is the best Dizzy game yet.

**Machine rating: 8-9-6**



## BEAT BOX CORNER

MicroRhythm+ ■

Funkies ■ C64 ■ £1.99

This is the second to play at MicroRhythm, a single-channel sampled drum 'machine' program that holds the sounds of an acoustic kit, + has four individually loaded kits. MicroRhythm fairly stands on its own with some big electric sounds, MicroRhythm (just one unusual brief human utterance), MicroRhythm (synthesised sounds plus funky drums) and MicroRhythm (exotic percussion for that South American feel). Easily entered into patterns of between one and 18 beats using the second line of the keyboard, the 120 patterns can be linked forming up to four different songs. Patterns and songs can be saved out for later use.

With realistic, high-quality sounds and easy programming of drum patterns, MicroRhythm was a bargain at two quid. The same price but four times the amount

of samples, MicroRhythm+ is a must-buy, making the earlier machines to some pose many and varied beats for nominal value. A bit difficult to find these days but well worth tracking down.

**Machine rating: 9-1-6**

## DRUM STUDIO

Smash 16 ■ Amiga ■ £4.99

A fairly recent attempt at producing an Amiga version of MicroRhythm, *Drum Studio* has two adequate but under-sounding drum kits, each sample's volume individually adjustable. Programming capacity and facilities are greater but the 16-bit samples are a bit noisier than MicroRhythm's 8-bit ones, a great opportunity missed by *Smash 16*.

**Machine rating: 8-3-6**

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# OUR MAN IN Japan

Games, games, games. Doncha just love 'em. Shintaro Kanagawa returns with news of the latest PC Engine and Game Boy releases in Japp'nin' Japan.

As predicted last month, PC Engine Super Star Soldier from Hudson Soft has revealed itself as a more violent rehash of their other successful shoot-'em-up Quindt. The game contains eight levels, all with different landscapes and guardians. You play Star Strain, at the helm of the Star Soldier Mk II. The new ship comes complete with lasers and an assortment of bullets firing in all directions. Travel, for

example, through space and over a military establishment surrounded by water, your aim is basically blast 'em around you, picking up power-ups along the way. Essentially there are four types of weapons: multi-shot, ring laser, split laser and swing fire. Each has two strength levels, with extra multi-shot capsules.

Now here's something you didn't know. To increase interest in their games every year, Hudson Soft travel around Japan in a big sales caravan trying to promote their latest big releases. The whole shabang contains competitions, freebies and loads of family entertainment. Their chosen game to hype this year is Super Star Soldier, so watch out, kids! (Guest Yetsuo appears on CD-ROM at end of June. It's based on a popular Japanese comic strip, which has already turned into a TV cartoon and a full-length animated feature film. I believe the comic is also available in English [translated by Viz Comics — not that Viz] under the title Lam.

Lam is the name of one of the female characters in the comic, and she is not just another ordinary Japanese schoolgirl. She may have white hair and green big eyes, but she also has a strange pair of small fangs. Thus is the flavor of Unesco Nature.

The game is an adventure resembling the cartoon and contains the usual



voices of the TV people who work on the cartoons. The main character is a boy called Asura. Of the control characters, four are girls, five are boys, and one is a priest with an orange head the size of the Mekon's (wink). The game also features crystal balls, men in suits and dark glasses, robot footprints, robots, helicopter gunships and a girl in a leopard skin bikini. Sounds interesting, but the game's all in Japanese, so you may have a bit of difficulty getting into it.

Shoot-'em-up sequel fans will be disappointed to receive information pertaining to Starfire Page 4. Gigen returns to battle against flying bears, eight-foot colored wild swords, strange god skulls, etc. Weapons can be chosen from a sword and shield, a long sword or slams. Items that can be collected along the way include balls of fire, laser bolts, walls of fire, auto protection, lives and healing potions.

Well, we've had a shoot-'em-up, a beat-'em-up and a game in Japanese that no-one can understand, all we need now is a sports game. And perfectly timed to follow the World Cup season is World Inside Hockey.

Without being picky, it does seem a bit strange that the game takes place on a green surface, looking not too dissimilar to grass. I mean, this is supposed to be beach volleyball, isn't it? Perhaps they've created some new strain of green sand. To be fair, there are some courts on sand, some on asphalt, even, but the majority are on grass. More realistically, the game's







## I'VE GOT THE POWER

You've probably heard of the Power Glove. It's an innovative controller device for the Nintendo. As the name suggests, you wear it on your hand, and by moving it you can hit and pick up things on the screen. The most famous example of this is Mike Tyson's *Punch Out*. You wear the glove, and throw lefts and rights, jabs and upper cuts, and the computer character dies. The news



from Information Global Service (IGS). You'd have thought they'd be accurate.

The game features two two-man/woman teams, and contains all the basic moves: attacking, blocking, dodging, saving etc. At the beginning of each game you can allocate certain points to specific attributes like power, skills, stamina, etc. And with a joystick superior up to four people can play at a time! Released at the end of July.

*Ladyblitz* (IGS) makes it to the PC Engine. It's a classic C&A game which came out in the UK about five years ago. The game basically involves a small sprite running up and down ladders collecting gold. Enemies can be ingeniously killed by creating holes in the floor for them to fall down. Worth buying if you haven't got it.

Finally on the Engine this month, I'm reviewing five upcoming games. *Beastie*, released in October, is a CD-ROM exchange game with quite outstanding graphics, and music written and performed especially for the game by a Japanese jazz band. Also you know all about it to be released on all formats by Tengen/Domark, and it looks good. Similarly with the CD-ROM Casemaster games, it came from the Desert (which should be the best game ever, by all accounts) and TV sports *Football*.



is that a new version is to be launched in Japan this summer — just imagine the fun you could have with *Strip Ahh Hong*.

As the Game Boy drives off attacks from other would-be hand-holds, the games for it just keep coming. There's *Red Alert*, an arcade adventure; countless puzzle games. *Loch 'n' Chess*, a cute Pac-Man-esque puzzle game; *Pipe Dream*, the US version of *Pipe Mania*; *Puzzle Lord*, a

jigsaw game, and so on. But there are also quite a few action games: *F-1 Race*, *Slam*, *Blaster* and *Temple Master*. *Wipe Out* is more a few. It may only have a green screen, the ladders may run out in a week, and lines may start disappearing off the sides, but it's still fighting a good fight.

Anyway, it's an introduction from me and a response to England's chances in the World Cup... *Ha! Don't see any leg teams there, mate!* — G.J.



As the summer software doldrums reach an all-time low, you can always rely on Paul "Catalina" Blythe to fly in with a new shipment of goodies.

## A Bard's Tale

Anyone remember Michael Crawford? Not? Well, he was the fellow responsible for *The Bard's Tale I* and *2* — and then he disappeared... The good news is that he's alive and well and working for Brøderbund. His first release is a sci-fi/fantasy RPG called *The Centaur Alliance*. Although the game initially resembles *Bard*, the system has been vastly improved, with a 3-D, 3D-based combat routine, multiple missions, character skills and automapping. I'll get back to the CD-ROM version soon.

Also from Brøderbund, in 1993 called *The Dark Heart of Albion*. You control four warriors as they conquer the evil (guarded by finding his head which is kept in the depths of a mountain city. First perspective interesting, look-down control, automapping and non-player character (NPC) close-up graphics are featured. A review of the PC version is on the way.

News has reached me that the well-received *Star Sage* series (I reviewed the first two ages ago) has been snapped up by Creative Arts in the States. Does this mean that their buddies Microsoft might distribute them in the UK?

Look out for a new SF RPG designed by Paragon — based upon the tabletop RPG created by Games Designer's Workshop in the States. Called *Mega Traveller 1* — *The Ultimate Conspiracy*. It features one of the most complex character generation routines ever seen (75 talents/skills and 30+ skills). With a top-down view of the 75 planets, space battles, close-up NPC portraits and multi-character parties, *Mega Traveller* looks promising.

On to the homegrown scene. It appears that the Zenda empire is going from strength to strength. I'll be looking at one or two of their latest releases very soon. However, David Appleby, John "Genghis" Wilson has kindly informed me of several older adventures that are now under his wing. *The Adventurer* (S&D Gray) and *Whiplash & Whiplash* (Editorial Mallard) are both excellent adventures for the ST, priced at £5.95 each. *The Adventurer* even comes with a free bonus disk. Two for One is an adventure double but for the ST containing The

*Challenge* and *The Thief*. Both are as Spectrum adventures re-tipped for the ST, so bear this in mind before you buy. Not bad value, though, at £4.99. The superb *Jahyl & Hyde* (Spectrum £8.99, £3.99, £3.99, £3, £3.99) is also available. Finally, check out the final of the *Indus* compilation (Spectrum £8.99). For £3.99 you get *Double Agent*, *Claw 88*, *The Lessons of Hercules*, *The Dances of Itha*, *The Secret of Little Medusa*, and *Distorted Creatures and Cavities*. This compilation is excellent value for money. I can't recommend it highly enough. Contact Zenith Software, 28 Spalding Way, Clapton, Hackney, London E5 7PL.

With a final comment to say that *Warrior Hero's Quest 2* and *King's Quest IV* are now out for the 1 Mbit Amiga. Two just got enough space to say goodbye... PAUL BLYTHE, TOM, NEWFIELD, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE S16 1JW.

PC £24.95

### CENTURION Electronic Arts

The basic premise of *Centurion* is that you play an ambitious officer out to defend Rome and its fledgling empire. Your ambition is to become Centur and rule the world — so you have these young officers never settle for a wife, mortgage and 2.3 children!

The tactical and strategic problems of actually conquering the opposition are fairly entertaining. After moving your legion onto a foreign country (invading) a diplomatic option becomes available, giving the opposition the chance to capitulate or ally. I never achieved anything with this (even on the easiest level). I was always definitely challenged — even by the smallest and weakest nations.

The tactical land combat is a semi-automatic affair. You give orders for a formation and a battle then you sit back and hope. The 3-D action battle is a well presented and interesting sequence. The formations (wedge etc) are well controlled while the flow of battle keeps you on the edge of your seat. Mouse rightly plays a big part. The seriousness of this area is underlined by the lack of consistency. While your military rank rises, the level of control you have on your men does not. In reality, the higher the rank, the less direct control you should have.

The other area of tactical combat is during the fleet combat. You control one of the two ships shown in top-down view. Damage being inflicted via missiles (arrows etc) and ramming. This section was unusual sitting as the ships had too little room to

## The ADVENTURE STRATEGY ROLEPLAY Column

maneuvers. In addition, only one ship of either side is shown, even if you command a fleet of 10 or more. No tactics can be utilized, therefore.

The area of the game which really disappointed me was the action sequences. In a response attempt to turn the game into *Defender of the Crown* you have the chance to play a laydown (shards here and a gladius leap-in-up. Very pretty, but pointless). They are supposed to increase your popularity and raise in cash at the same time. Really I would have thought that meeting the largest empire the world has ever seen would reflect on the player's status. As for the loot? How come your earnings from a day at the races compare with the loot accumulated from conquering

## PC £24.99 EARTHRISE Impressions

Setus is a mining colony. Conflict has been lost. Okay, you might say, it happens all the time. Trouble is, this particular colony sits on a mechanically propelled asteroid which just happens to be on a collision course with Earth. Little the rest of Earth jump up and down in panic, you must do a *King Canute* by stopping millions of tons of asteroids with your bare hands.

*Earthrise* is Internal's first foray into the realm of animated adventures. It is a

large game, 2.2MB, over six disks. *Earthrise* may have been adopted for all used commands (and can be used in conjunction with some desktop kits).

The game is okay (an adequate two-word type) and while the graphics are fairly good, they are not up to the quality of the more recent Sierra games. However, despite its dated appearance, *Earthrise* is quite enjoyable. I look forward to further improved games of this type from Internal. The basics are there, but more polish is needed.

**ADVENTURE 74%**



the whole of *Crocodyl* Father until now, don't you think?

As it is, *Earthrise* is a real mess of game types that will satisfy no-one.

**STRATEGY 48%**

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## RORKE'S DRIFT Impressions

Impressions ask you to replay the epic defence of Rorke's Drift (they supply dates on 22 January 1879) when 137 British soldiers (some of them hospitalised) fought off 4,000 Zulus.

The game is played on a small level. You can observe the plan of the depot and its surrounding area (this is just a basic map, not an alternative viewpoint). Check on casualties and observe the health, ammo, defence strength and manpower.

*Rorke's Drift* is a failure, for a number of reasons. Firstly, the manual is very poor. Some of the commands are not explained and others do not tally with the screen. There is no discussion of tactics. One of the most successful military tactics used from Napoleonic times was the advancing line, which one line of around ten men fires a volley, while a second line kneeling in front is, in the meantime, reloading. There was no mention of this or other tactics, the background info is very shallow too.

I would have liked to have seen some form of 'subterfuge window' (similar to *Assault* and *Blade* commands) where command where I could order a back of men to do the same thing (or move east). Unfortunately, I had to give each man his own order for every turn — all 137 of them!

There is no space for snatching during the order phase, only during the battle phase. Even this proved to be very slow on both *Assault* and *ST*. Finally, with the game being in 3D, the viewpoint was sometimes restricted. This hampered judgments in distance as well as during tactical manoeuvres.

*Rorke's Drift* may look nice, but there are too many design flaws for it to be recommended.

**STRATEGY 34%**

## BOOK REVIEW

Book review £7.95

## COMPUTER ADVENTURES THE SECRET ART

Author: Gil Williamson. Available via normal outlets or through mail order from Addison Systems, Marlowood, Lodge Hill Road, Parklands, Slaverly Grove and (JULIA PLS, Tel: 0300) 776666.

Gil Williamson has produced a book on advertising, the less of which has been missing from the shelves of the narrative adventure author for too long. Gil gets down to the gritty gritty of just what constitutes an adventure: what is required, what are the ingredients to a successful adventure, how to integrate the design elements, etc.

The 128 pages are divided up into 10 chapters with a number of appendices. The contents cover the eternal question, how do you want to present your game? Text or graphics?

The book discusses how you go about creating ideas, and covers plot elements like puzzles, weapons, tactics, maps and

so on. Gil gives good advice on basic graphic design (perspective, composition, etc) and even the existing the adventure more atmospheric by including incidental messages, even if they have no bearing on the actual solution.

The style of images, text and sound is debated after which various game systems are compared. A chapter on how to publish your game takes about every publisher (without the expense, publishing your own work, going to an outside publisher and utilizing their protection. After a more detailed look at the components that form an adventure game, Gil gives a sample transcript of one of his own adventures, produced with an American shareware adventure creation utility called AGD (Adventure Game Disk), reviewed elsewhere in this issue.

The appendices include lots of useful reference material, such as a list of verbs and a bibliography. There's a handy index at the back too.

The *Secret Art* is a compact book packed with valuable advice which will be of interest to the adventure player but absolutely priceless to the adventure author. Readable, humorous and excellent value for money — I picked this book up and couldn't put it down till I'd finished.

## BOOK REVIEW

PC £24.99

## CIRCUIT'S EDGE

### Infixion

Based upon the cyberpunk novel of George Alec Effinger, *Circuit's Edge* has you as Matt Andean, a PI living in an alternate ghetto known as the Dodecahedron, who is probably just as much a criminal as those people he is hired to chase. His initial case is to search for the missing notebook of a local Gadgeteer. This leads Matt to unravel various murders and reveal a large, power struggle plot.

The game uses windows and menus during play. The three main windows show a first-person perspective view of your surroundings, any characters you are chatting to and a text window conveying messages, speech, etc. State (status), food, and ammo listed on the right. The menus allow you to look to the left and right of a central view — a sort of peripheral vision effect, look inventory, do an action and look at the auto mapping routine. One of the unique aspects is to plug a chip (called modules and devices) into yourself. These can give you extra abilities and can change your whole personality if need be.

The talk menu gives you a list of ques-

tions and comments so that you can interact, this menu changes after each round of interaction. Fighting is done in real time. You select an action and weapon from a menu. I disliked this area because while I was selecting my action from the menu I was often puzzled in the meantime (There should be a pause function while you make your selection.)

The game does address the thorny questions of sex and drugs. However, the former is toned down giving no offence to anyone while the latter tends to concentrate on the negative effects of drugs.

On the PC, Audio and Roland sound cards are supported. While the Audio gives some good sounds I must give a special mention to the Roland. Wow! The moody bass sounds with a sprinkling of reverberity add to the atmosphere, giving it a "blues and ditty" feel. In fact I was killed twice while enjoying the simple but haunting musical effects!

Not a classic by any means, but *Circuit's Edge* offers enough challenge and intrigue to be recommended to all RPG players interested in the cyberpunk theme.



## ST IMPERIUM

### Electronic Arts

One word springs to mind when I think of EA's new space strategy game, *Imperium*: class. This game has style, elegance and panache — and lots of it.

The object of the game is to create an empire. You have just been elected as Earth's leader and must reach out into the cosmos to build an empire of vast proportions. There are two ways to win at this game: either live for 1000 years or crush your enemy's empire.

You may be aware of other games which demand a similar conclusion. However, I have never seen a strategy game with so many interconnected factors, depth or such lasting playability as *Imperium* offers.

The game interface is smooth and slick. A total *IMPERIUM* in fact has commands are positioned along the top of the screen. Once selected they produce a window which can be moved, resized or partially closed to leave just the title bar. The latter gives the convenience of instant access along with a tidy screen. Windows are full of buttons, sliders and so on.

The game's many subroutines and features prevent me mentioning all of the factors involved, but here are a few salient points.

Fleets (as well as various troop-types) are necessary to colonise and invade. You can create new customised ship classes using a mix of weapons, engines, etc. Subordinates can be assigned to lead fleets for planets, or become ambassadors, etc. Their individuals have their own personalities. To maintain quality you may wish to reward (or punish) your ministers. Your subordinates have a tremendous effect on affairs so you'll need to be careful who you appoint to what job.

Airships can be used to spy on other empires. They need to be constructed in strategically useful areas. Air Ships are useful in transporting people and materials for colonisation or in trade (using any of the 20 available products). There is a full economic structure. Taxation, balance of trade, subsidies, population control, price indexes and commodity levels all play a big part as do potential embargoes protecting your precious levels of trade in one particular commodity. Politics is important: you need to remain popular and win regular elections to stay in power.

Reports are many and varied. From Planet Reports which inform you of its progress, to Planetary Reports that give you masses of data (population, stability, technology level, moral infrastructure, etc).

Generally, the graphics are in various shades of grey which give a classical, corporate, Apple Macintosh look (there are colour endgame screens) while the sound produces some excellent classical pieces. Wonderful stuff.

Even with the smooth interface, you will find *Imperium* has a shallow learning curve. However, once you are familiar with the set-up you'll have a ball trying to balance the many related factors which will ensure your survival and success. In a word, absolutely-*blondy-bland*.

PC, ST £4.00/3

## ADVENTURE GAME TOOLKIT

Available from Amiga/Softworks, Manchester, Lodge Hill Road, Farnham, Surrey GU14 0FD.

Having evolved from the simple GAMES system, the *Adventure Game Toolkit* is an excellent standalone, adventure creation utility that produces finished adventures that look and play remarkably like Infocom text adventures.

Designed by David Malenkov, the PC version I reviewed comes with 11 (sound and silly sample adventures) All of which can be discarded to aid you in the design of your own creation.

AGT is, without doubt, the simplest yet most technically advanced adventure utility I have ever seen. The finished game can be produced in two levels. The Standard Level is the easiest to use it requires no programming knowledge, but still produces a finished product which looks impressive. The Professional Level adds a series of programming commands (such as *Make Commands*). Again, though, they are easy to learn because they are fully structured and they use English language commands. For example you use the *IsCanyouDoSomething* command to check whether a character is carrying an object and *IsInRoom* to check whether something is enclosed — simple.

The parser is advanced. As well as recognising the *ALL* command, you can use complex commands with *AND*, *THEN* and punctuation. Type *THROW ROCK AT THEM* and then say *ATTACK HIM*

and the parser will know you mean the thief. If it recognises, you can LOOK IN, GRAB, ISHOLD, etc. things. You can use the cursor keys to do directional commands. *ASK*, *TALK*, *TALK* to people, design commands to function keys, list only, and there are *AGAIN*, *BRIEF*, *REDO*, *SCROLL*, *SCRIPTUNSCRIPT* commands — I could go on for ever!

The four document files give an enormous amount of help. They include a couple of very handy memory utilities which ease your adventure creating even more!

AGT was created using Turbo Pascal 4, which may explain its structured approach. Registered users, can have the whole 10,000 lines of source code used to create AGT. So you can alter, modify and add to the system! No excuse for adventure utility control now is there?

The only thing missing from AGT is a graphic utility, it looks & can save files from recognised graphic programs. This is no big deal to my mind as this system can produce top-class adventures without the use of graphics. However, the development of AGT is very dynamic. New additions and versions are always in the pipeline (a version 2.0 of AGT and a point programming menu utility are already on the way, so the prospects of a graphic utility/toolbar appearing are good).

AGT is probably the bargain of the year. No offence to shareholders intended. Apparently, Softworks produced AGT for Electronic Arts to market as a top-flight adventure utility. However, the deal fell through so Softworks decided to go public. Thank your wallet that they did!



PC (also Amiga, C64)

## BAD BLOOD

*Origin: Mindscape*

Utilizing a similar system to his successful Times of Lore series, Chris Roberts has taken a post-apocalyptic world as the setting for *Bad Blood*.

Coming on four disks, with a 26-page manual, reference card, *Threats Comprehensive Guide* to beasts and hordes of the Plains and a dipron radiation detector badge, *Bad Blood* takes you to a world populated by the survivors of a nuclear war. They fall into two groups, humans and mutants (hence the *Bad Blood*).



Well, humans have been fleeing down to the mutant camp, but the humans, equipped with superior hardware, are about to launch a major offensive to wipe out the mutant population. It is your task to save your mutant home and render the human wastes to try to find a way to stop the slaughter.

After the excellent introductory sequence showing the fall and rise of civilization, you are presented with the mutant leader's appeal for aid in the time of uncertainty. You are able to pick one of three characters to play with. After which the game shifts to the play mode — a look down view with pseudo 3-D buildings and characters.

The action is viewed via an abandoned TV screen. The TV's controls double for TALK, ROOMING, USE, OPTIMIZE, GIVE, and INVENTION commands. Menus and text windows pop up when required. Talking to a character is invoked by clicking next to



someone and accessing the TALK command. A menu of possible questions are listed. This menu grows with experience as characters talk about new subjects. So if one character mentioned "warriors" that subject would be added to the TALK menu. You



could then ask somebody else about "monsters" later on.

Weapons, food (fusion chips?) and other items can be found lying around. Bumping into them picks them up.

*Bad Blood* is an enjoyable, simplified, action-oriented RPG. The background tunes (via Roland, Adlib and Game Chamber soundcards) add atmosphere, as do the effective VGA graphics displaying a host of monsters, mutants, the wreckage of old cities, etc. Definitely one to grind with after a hard day playing *Liberia 67*.

RPG

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# WHAT NOW?

It's good to see so many letters streaming into the column. My poor carrier pigeons don't know what's hit them! Things are becoming crowded up here, pigeon-wise. Though Uer Melry, from Israel, has some advice: "If those pigeons really bother you, some spray must be effective — only make sure it's ozone friendly. God I hate pigeons!" I was thinking more along the lines of some ozone friendly hand-grenades! Actually, they're quite a friendly lot — if a little smelly. Ozone friendly air freshener anyone?

## Russia

C64, PC

For the Soviet player, be advised that you should retire and retreat as much as possible. The Germans will run out of steam soon enough. After this happens a methodical offensive (killing off German units, one at a time) should help ensure victory. The German player should not be over-ambitious. After the initial offensive, it is imperative to keep German losses at under three forces per axis. Stay Army Group South at Odessa. Ground military, or support and divisional reinforcements should be maintained in the same percentage as initially shown. Beware of stripping the group's assets. You'll find this impossible to resist. Limited gains can be made by using the Hot/Display orders. This will maintain a defensive front. Even though holes will appear, it will be unlikely that any side at the stage will be able to gain a foothold. You can then wait for reinforcements.

## Police Quest 2

ST, Amiga, PC

BANG! BANG! BANG! Paul Ripley reporting from the wreckage of war torn Santa Sams. BLAM! Gunguis, gasp damn. Don't forget to use the shooting range to adjust Sam's sights. His gun will be far more accurate. Oust everything for fingerprints. Call for backup, move your hand gun in their faces and identify yourself as a police officer during felony arrests — it's the proper procedure. Always in question addresses, you may obtain info on the second line around 8000M Paul Ripley. Name at TGM, war torn Santa Sams.AMF — ugh.



I standing mass of flesh that appears to have been human at one time. Tubers and wires extend from his body leading a machinery which drive him alive. Finally, his visage, name and he begins to speak.

## The Magic Candle

PC

Would I be wasting lyrical if I suggested that you take two wizards and as many chaps with money-making professions as possible? Probably. But would I risk getting on your wick if I then added that you should have your Farmer hunt in the outdoors to increase his skill which will cut down dangerous ambushes? Yes! Hm. What if I offered to quit with the candle puns? Right — next, please!

## Neuromancer

Amiga, C64 & PC

Anyone having problems with Gnostice should consider leaving him till later on in the game. You'll need the heavy duty Black & Center before he can be vanquished so just back off, okay?

## Reach for the Stars

Amiga, PC, C64

Playing the advanced rules, build up a new world social environment to a habitable 40 quickly. After which the population grows. Don't spot your off-worlders or the cost to sustain them will rise. Only raise the social environment when industrial capacity is reached and further development is impossible.

If you require an immediate research and development program, have your wealthy planets during production save 150 RPs in the global fund for each underdeveloped colony you have. This allows the minor settlements to spend RPs for your powerful planets, which are otherwise limited to 100 RPs or R&D expenditures per turn.

## Gold Rush

Amiga, ST, PC

Melvin Lodge of Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, needs some help finding the goldmine. Let's see what we can do for you. Have you been to the outhouse (after following the mule from Fort Sutter)? Enter it and light your lantern. There should be a hole there somewhere. Mip in, move SW until you reach a large door. Once past the door, climb down the ladder and...ya dare one more. To find your lerp (at the end of the game), climb back up the mine shaft to the right and above the large black rock to the left. Go left to the red ladder and down. Follow the shaft down and west until big lrs appears.



## Second Front

PC

A wee bit of advice for this masterly piece of programming from the halls of CGA. Playing the Germans I have had success using the very first battle plan presented by General Madsen on August 5, 1941. Basically this entails a 'two blow' idea. Give limited tank force towards the river Dvina and Leningrad in the north, while striking a second blow, south, towards Kiev. The most powerful surge should strike through the centre towards Moscow. Do not try to capture Leningrad and repeat the temptation of being 'strangled' in the south. It will only end in tears.

## Dragon Wars

C64, PC

If you must start with a new team, take a look at the pre-generated set. They have been carefully selected with well implemented skills. Take note. For goodness sake do not, what ever you do, transfer characters from one team's tale character class. They will always be worse off in the new Dragon Wars scenario.

## Starflight 2

PC

Sitting at the bar the other day (sitting at Warp Factor 6, I said to myself, Paul, if I was playing Starflight 2 what would I go to get a good start? Well, ask in the Class 1 armaments (absolute waste of time), nip over to system Class 66, next in Starport, and the Class II system at the top of the three Copper for some quick cash. Really, see if Lillo did I know that I had totally forgotten about the profitable trading of Tardovores! Happy Juice is the Tardovore (spacehog) sogg of the cloud. Oh well, cheer up, pal.

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**Abstract**

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## AMIGA 2000

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## FLIGHT OF FANTASY

Figure 10. February 1976. Very intense orange and white transverse banding appears, with diffuse orange. In these photos, the orange under-band was just starting. The dark banding was orange that appeared and became diffuse and it's possible we were at that the surface stage. These include the transition.

100

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1000

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1000000000	Comedy	PG-13	John Dahl	John Dahl	90	1997-08-01	\$1,000,000	1
1000000000	Comedy	PG-13	John Dahl	John Dahl	90	1997-08-01	\$1,000,000	1
1000000000	Comedy	PG-13	John Dahl	John Dahl	90	1997-08-01	\$1,000,000	1

**Abstract**

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# LETTER PAGE

A reduced Letterpage this month, so just enough space to say there's £50 for the best letter sent to:  
**NEWSFIELD, TOM LETTUCE, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1JH.**

## OFFER ADVICE

Dear Lettuce  
 Recently my son was contacted by telephone out of the blue by someone asking if he was interested in some Mega Drive games at a much-reduced price. We became suspicious when the boy concerned said as that we would be unable to ring his number because the telephone was faulty!

I tried to devise a fire method of substantiating both parties involved and I came up with the enclosed offer. It may be in the interest of TGM readers to take it when dealing with unknown individuals!

**Tony Morris, Manchester M20 2BT.**

**PS:** Needless to say we did not get our £10 Mega Drive games and the cheque was

stopped.  
 Dear Sir  
 Re: Recent telephone conversation and the cheap software you are offering.

Because I did not want to send such a large amount of money without some sort of security, I have enclosed a post-dated cheque for the agreed amount.

If I do not receive the games by the date on the cheque I will know that you have changed your mind and I will stop the cheque. If the games are received, the cheque will clear normally. I think this method is the safest for both of us. If you do not have a bank account and would like to put the cheque into a trust or hands or a family account then just sign the back of the cheque.

## I STILL HAVEN'T FOUND...

Dear TGM

Where, oh where, oh where, can I get hold of Psycho Soccer (as reviewed in TGM008)? I've

been collecting football games ever since I first played Match Day on an old battered Spectrum. I thought Kick Off was good, but Psycho Soccer looks like it will fulfil all my footballing dreams.  
 Phil King, Chesh Hill, Shropshire.



On one, Phil, don't give up taking the tablets. Still, I know what you mean, and believe me Psycho Soccer plays as good as it looks. If you want to get hold of a copy, you can get it via mail order from Robin Candy/Martin Lapworth, The Games Martech, The Keep, Ludlow Castle, Shropshire. Please make cheques payable to Robin, to Misses Hoodless (Ludlow Castle) for £19.99.

Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

## CORRESPONDENTS

From around the world, TGM readers write in to let us know what's happening in their area. This month we visit Israel, where User Story writes.

Despite being a small nation, Israel consumes a surprisingly large amount of hardware and software. And, unlike other countries, the computer market started during 1981 with the VCS consoles and later the J2001.

Today, the number of 8-bit users has dropped. The Amiga reached us in 1985 and was, until recently, imported by a company called Tadiran. Amiga is a very respected name here. The Atari ST has unfortunately failed and requires a very name who will try to branch out. Both formats are easily out-manned by the PC. Most PCs are clones of the primitive C64, variety VCR, is available but not widely used.

Consoles are fairly successful. Apart from surviving VCS users, the Sega Master System has been around since mid-1987, and is doing well. SDDS, its importer, managed to sell 7,000 units during

the first year (an enormous quantity for Israel). PG Engines, Mega Drive, Lynx and Neo Geo are all names that no-one has heard here.

The local software/hardware industry is geared towards high-end applications and industrial users. Beethoven, authors of Photon Paint 1 and 2, are from Tel-Aviv and there are a large number of active user groups — one group in Haifa caters some 300 Amiga owners.

Coins are a relative success, although the machines are often in bad shape. Many arcades store extremely rare titles for around 1/10 a game.

My main complaints are pricing and attitude. Everything costs a fortune, even Amiga costs around 200 and last year from £15 to £25. The pricing policy leads to a market dominated by pirates. Attitude is another thing. Israelis don't care about software houses, authors and labels. They just want to have fun — this immature way of thinking really annoys me. But, overall, there's enough games action around here to keep anyone going for ages!

## HAND-HELD QUIZ

Dear TGM

I have two questions for you.  
 1) Is it worth selling my Sega Master System to buy an Atari Lynx or a Game Boy?

2) Will there be loads of software around for both handhelds in future years, or will they just be forgotten?

The first I can spend is £100, and I am looking for something portable. Can you advise me which is the better buy.

**Chris Armstrong, Glasgow G40 4EP.**

Obviously, some computers will be forgotten but the few you

mention, the Game Boy and the Lynx, look like being around for some time. The Lynx is officially available in the UK now (at £119.95), and the Game Boy gets its UK launch in September (similar £100) along with a plethora of red-hot titles. For carrying around, the Game Boy is the better — it's much smaller and the batteries last longer. There's also more software out for the Game Boy now, and it's all pretty good. The Lynx's capabilities are obviously better, but we're only seen the games for it. You will have to played both to discover which suits you the best. Buying one without seeing the other could lead to disappointment.

# WIN TEN CARS!\*

\*Not real ones, you dingbat!

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## WIN A VERY SPECIAL CAR INDEED!

There's nothing more exciting than zooming down the M1 in your Ferrari, with a leggy blonde at your side and the wind blowing through your hair. In fact, it's just as much fun in your Porsche, isn't it? Only one problem, most of us can't even get a leggy blonde, never mind the Porsche or Ferrari — and that's where your favourite magazine (and Accolade) can come in useful. As the adverts imply, all you need is the car and you're halfway to getting the girl.

Accolade have the cars in *The Quest: Test Drive II* (in fact they've got lots of other rad cars on the *Supercars* and *Muscle Cars* PC, Amiga and C64 accessory disks), and the wind and sun can be supplied by the *European* and *California Challenge* scenery disks. All you need is a Spectrum, Amstrad, C64, Amiga, ST or PC. (Sorry, but we can't supply the girl.)

## YES, YES, GET ON WITH IT

Even if you haven't got a computer, you can still simulate the action thanks to these great prizes. To celebrate the success of the accessory disks, Accolade are giving away a very special prize in the form of TEN perfect metal models of the sporty classic 1965 car, the Ford AC Cobra (you'll find the Cobra on the *Muscle Cars* disk). The Cobra presentation car is not only rather smart, you can also fill the bonnet to check out the engine, use the steering wheel to move the wheels, open and shut the doors, and it all comes mounted on a plinth! It'll impress your chums no end (and makes for a useful pick-up line: "Wanna come back to much place and see my Cobra?").

## I FANCY THAT!

It's very simple to win one of these sought-after model cars. Just solve the wordsearch below, in which there are ten *Disc*-related words. Ring each one, fill in your name and address on the coupon and waaa! it is in the post to: NEWSFIELD, COBRA MUSCLE CAR COMPO, TGM, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1JW. Entries here by August 23, first ten correct entries plucked from the 'trunk' win. Good luck!

## WORDS TO FIND:

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